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Marcin Sosik

**GEBIRA AT THE JUDAEAN COURT**

Scholars attempting to reconstruct the structure and functioning of state institutions in the Judean kingdom face a highly difficult challenge owing to the scarcity of source material. A reading of the Books of Kings may easily be subject to deception prompted by its chronicle-like style suggesting matter-of-fact credibility of the information offered. Yet its historical message was subordinated to theological objectives, and not to a need for a straightforward picture of the events described.

It is the dearth of source information and the limited credibility of the Biblical account that prompts a different outlook on the question of women the Hebrew Bible calls *Gebira*.<sup>1</sup> Helpful hints are provided by the word's philology, its structure, derivation, and usage, and by a confrontation of the Biblical text with archaeological material and with any information we have on the role of women in royal courts in the region.

\* \* \*

The root גבר and its derivatives suggest dignity, special strength and power. The verb *geber* (גָּבַר) means "to rule," "exercise power," "be the master."<sup>2</sup> In Judges 5:31, it is used in the form *gebura* (גְּבוּרָה) meaning strength, power. The noun *geber* (גִּבּוֹר), "man," is used in the Bible in the sense of tyrant, ruler (Isaiah 22:17), prince, or king (2 Sam 2:31, Jer 22:30; Hab 2:5; Ps 52:9, 89, 49), while in Job 38:3, 40:7, it means a valiant man. There also exists the form *gebir* (גְּבִיר), ruler, used in Gen 27:29, 37, which is the masculine of *gebira*. The noun only appears in the Old Testament 15 times, whether in base form or in *status constructus*, including five times in relation to the wife, mother, or grandmother of the ruler of Israel or Judah. It is to this group of women that attention is devoted here. 1 Kings 15:13 and 1 Chr 15:16 mention Maacha as being stripped of the title of *Gebira* by King Asa. Prophet Jeremiah twice mentions King Jehoiachin and his *Gebira* (Jer 13:18, 29:2) in connection with their exile into the Babylonian captivity. In speaking of the sons of *gebira*, 2 Kings 10:13 refers to the sons of Jezebel. Apart from women of the court, the term is used three times to describe Sarah, the wife of Abraham (Gen 16:4, 8, 9), in the sense of the mistress of the house rather than a servant. A similar translation applies in Ps 123:2, Prov 30:23, Isa 24:2, and 2 Kings 5:3. In 1 Kings 19:11, it is used to mean the pharaoh's wife, in Isa 47:7 as a metaphor for Babylon.

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<sup>1</sup> This text uses twin spellings of the word *gebira*. When capitalized, it refers to the title which the Hebrew Bible accorded to women involved with the Judean royal court. Otherwise, the word is in lower case.

<sup>2</sup> Alhstrom 1963, 61.

It should be thought that the word *gebira* was in use by the Hebrews long before they appeared in Canaan, which is why it is so difficult to trace its original meaning. Herbert Donner believes<sup>3</sup> that it was first associated with the family, only later to acquire a broader sense. That the noun *gebira* was used about Sarah (Gen 16:4, 8, 9) seems insufficient evidence to confirm this hypothesis. It might equally well be assumed, considering other examples of its usage, that it was originally applied to a princely or kingly person and only later broadened its meaning.

An analysis of the word *gebira* leads to several conclusions about its usage with reference to women at the Judean court. First, the root גבר is visibly related to authority, power, rule, making it difficult to accept its translation as Queen Mother. It seems more in tune with its root sense to read it as Great Lady.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, it seems surprising that *gebira* is used sparingly and that it is the only title accorded to women involved with the Judean court.<sup>5</sup> The Old Testament only applies to them words defining their family position, such as mother, daughter, or wife. The Hebrew word *malka* is used solely for royal women in other countries.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, *sarah*, a princess in the royal family, is used mainly for non-Israeli women.<sup>7</sup>

\* \* \*

Just four mentions of Great Lady is too little substance to hypothesize about her status and role at the Judean royal court. It may therefore be worth asking whether the Biblical authors did not in some instances omit to mention the *Gebira* title due to women close to Judean kings.

Some scholars take it for granted that all mothers of Judean rulers mentioned in the Hebrew Bible bore the title of *Gebira* as their sons ascended to the throne. Yet it seems that the mother's name appears as a routine part of an introductory formula.<sup>8</sup> If the queen mother is not mentioned in the same way in the kingdom of Israel, it may be assumed that the deuteronomic editor was trying to lend emphasis to the solemn ascent to the throne of Judean kings. The practice would serve to highlight the continuation of David's dynasty.<sup>9</sup> The formula does not title the king's mother as *Gebira*, instead using the phrase *veshem immo*, i.e. "and his mother's name is." Therefore, I suppose that associating the name in the formula with the Great Lady stems from a mistaken translation of *Gebira* as Queen Mother.

<sup>3</sup> Donner 1959, 106.

<sup>4</sup> Bowen 2001, 598.

<sup>5</sup> Bowen 2001, 598.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chr 9:1.

<sup>7</sup> Judg 5:29; 1 Kings 11:3; Isa 49:23.

<sup>8</sup> In the Books of Kings, a description of each reign is preceded by an introductory formula stating the dates, the king's age, etc., and also his mother's name. Only in the case of Jehoram (2 Kings 8:16–18) and Ahaz (2 Kings 16:2–3) does a woman's name not appear. For Asa, the mother's name was replaced with the grandmother's. According to 1 Kings 15:8 and 2 Chr 14:1, Asa was a son of Abiah, but 1 Kings 15:2, 8 and 2 Chr 16:16 suggest that both were sons of Maacha. Albright 1963, 157–158 believes that Asa could be a younger son of Rehoboam, whose mother had died.

<sup>9</sup> Ben-Barak 1991, 24.

Most often, the title of the Great Lady is ascribed to two royal women: Bathsheba, the mother of King Solomon, and Athaliah, the mother of King Ahaziah. Although the former woman was connected with the court of the united monarchy, I recall it because scholars often treat Bathsheba as *Gebira*,<sup>10</sup> although the Hebrew Bible never calls her that.

The reason Bathsheba is seen as a Great Lady is an erroneous interpretation of 1 Kings 1:11–21 and 1 Kings 1:28–31. It is understood as a sign of her co-responsibility for the royal succession. A closer reading of the text leads to an entirely different conclusion. Bathsheba does not turn to David about succession of her own accord, but yields to manipulation by Nathan, who persuades her to save her own life and that of Solomon (1 Kings 1:12). If Adonijah were to inherit David's throne, he could exile or execute Bathsheba and Solomon to eliminate a competitor. Therefore her collusion with Nathan should be seen as driven by her will to survive rather than as an indication of her political role in the state.

Likewise, the passage in 1 Kings 2:13–18 interpreted as evidence for Bathsheba's mediatory responsibility between political factions in the kingdom seems to carry little conviction. It seems that her behavior toward Adonijah was no more than a ploy finally to get rid of an internal threat. It is hardly believable that the queen did not realize that his request was impossible to grant and could be seen as a clumsy attempt to capture the throne.<sup>11</sup> This is suggested by the final outcome of her actions, which was the death of Adonijah and his supporters.

The case of Athaliah was quite different. Her elimination of members of the royal family and seizure of full power in the kingdom may be seen as evidence of her considerable political influence.<sup>12</sup> Some scholars suggest that her rise to the throne (1 Kings 11:1–3) was an act of despair,<sup>13</sup> rather than proof of her holding the title of Great Lady. Her having murdered the royal family in Israel and witnessed the death of her son (1 Kings 9:24–37) may have instilled fear in Athaliah, leading her to desperate action to save herself.

The material presented above, therefore, does not permit the conclusion that Bathsheba or Athaliah held any title giving them a specific status and power in the state.

\* \* \*

Maacha and Nehushta are the only royal women in Judah to be described in the Hebrew Bible as *gebira*. Other than designating them as bearing the title, the Old Testament offers no explanation as to any power or responsibility that went with that

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<sup>10</sup> She is called the first Gebira in Israel: Ahlstrom 1963, 118. Information on Bathsheba's elevated status may be found in the following publications: Berlin, 1982, 70–76; Flanagan 1983, 48–49.

<sup>11</sup> Adonijah asked permission to marry Abishag as a subterfuge to seize power. Abishag was in David's harem. After his death, the harem was taken over by his successor Solomon. According to the law in the East, a son succeeding to kingship after his father also became the master of his wives and concubines (cf. Hdt. III, 68). That is why any approach to the women of a deceased king was considered a coup d'état.

<sup>12</sup> Ahlstrom 1963, 63–64.

<sup>13</sup> Ben-Barak 1991, 28.

status. We must therefore turn to non-Biblical sources for hints about the nature of the title.

Maacha was a grandmother of King Asa and probably exercised rule before he came of age. According to 1 Kings 15:13, she was deprived of the title of Great Lady because she had committed *mipleset la asherah*. This phrase can be translated as either an “obscene thing for Asherah,” here understood as the goddess, or an “obscene thing of the asherah” as an object of cult.<sup>14</sup> The earlier translation seems better, since in deuteronomic prose the word *asherah*, or idol, occurs as a noun without qualifiers, as is the case here.<sup>15</sup>

The text of 1 Kings 15:13 implies that Maacha worshiped the goddess Asherah and fashioned a cultic effigy for her, for which Asa stripped her of Great Ladyship. The king’s reaction may suggest that the figure was an alien element introduced to Judean worship. Maacha’s background seems to confirm this possibility.<sup>16</sup> Yet the Bible and archaeological research demonstrate that such reasoning is erroneous, and Asa’s belief was not of the common variety. S.M. Olyan argues that the cult of Asherah might have been part of state-sanctioned worship, affording her the same devotion as Yahweh in official Judean religion.<sup>17</sup> It may well be thought that her effigy stood in the Jerusalem Temple as it acted chiefly as the king’s chapel.

Therefore, Maacha’s worship of Asherah in the Temple was not a transgression that Asa purged. By all signs, Asherah was soon returned to her place. This is suggested by 2 Kings 18:4. Hezekiah removed Asherah from Jerusalem as part of his reform, but Manasseh soon erected another (2 Kings 21:7), which was not destroyed until under the reform by King Josiah (2 Kings 23:6).

Such and many other mentions in the Bible combine to suggest that it was the norm in the southern kingdom to worship both Yahweh and Asherah in the Jerusalem Temple. The fervor of such reformers as Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah in removing what they felt was a devious cult was an exception rather than the rule. This conclusion is supported by epigraphic sources. The presence of Asherah is confirmed by the Khirbet el-Qom inscription from the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>18</sup> and the Kuntillet Ajrud text of the 9<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, the example of Maacha may be evidence of a link between the rank of the Great Lady and the official state worship in Judah, and more specifically that part of it which included the goddess Asherah. Unfortunately, the Bible supplies no information about the role of the *gebira* in the cult in the southern kingdom.

<sup>14</sup> In the Bible, the term “asherah” appears frequently, but not always with reference to the pagan goddess; it also stands for an object of cult. The latter sense is older and occurs more often. Asherahs symbolized life and fertility and were long a characteristic element in Canaanite sanctuaries. Despite their wide occurrence, neither the Bible nor other sources report what they looked like. We may only guess that they were made of wood, since descriptions of their destruction mention them being hacked and burned.

<sup>15</sup> In 1 Kings 16:33, Ahab made the asherah, in 1 Kings 14:23 men built altars, pillars, and asherahs – in both cases the word “asherah” is used without a qualifier and refers to an object of worship. For more arguments for this translation, see: Ackerman 1993, 389–391.

<sup>16</sup> The very name Maacha and her father’s name Abshalom suggest a foreign background.

<sup>17</sup> Olyan 1988, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Miller 1986, 246.

<sup>19</sup> Tigay 1987, 173–175.

Nehushta, the mother of King Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8), was another woman at the Judean royal court who was unquestionably a Great Lady. This is indicated by Jer 29:2, which speaks of the king and his *Gebira* being taken into captivity. Dry as this information is, it offers no clues to support our earlier conclusions about the role of the Great Lady in Judah. Susan Ackerman finds evidence<sup>20</sup> for her links with Asherah in her very name. In her opinion, the name Nehushta comes from the root *nahash*, or serpent, making her a “snake woman,” which points directly to Asherah, whose link with the snake is attested in archaeological material.<sup>21</sup> Written sources are also extant which imply Asherah’s connections with the snake. A proto-Sinaitic text openly calls her a “snake woman.”<sup>22</sup> Also a Punic tablet describing Asherah as *hwt* may help support our hypothesis.<sup>23</sup> The *hwt* is probably connected with old-Aramaic *hwh* and Arabic *hayya*, an epithet meaning “snake.” Such evidence leads by implication to the belief that *Gebira* was implicated with the cult of the goddess Asherah in the Judean kingdom. The Book of Jeremiah (Jer 13:18) supplies more information on the Great Lady. It clearly implies the *Gebira*’s high status in the kingdom since, like the king, she wore a crown, a symbol of royal power. Further confirmation comes in Jer 29:2, which, in listing those abducted from Jerusalem, right after King Jehoiachin, mentions the *Gebira*, suggesting her high position at the ruler’s side. The examples of Maacha and Nehushta have supplied us with arguments which may suggest the existence in the Judean kingdom of the position of a Great Lady and her connection with the cult of the goddess Asherah.

\* \* \*

The conclusion presented seems to be confirmed by examples of women serving a similar function as the *Gebira* in other Near Eastern communities. They may also help cast more light on the role of women at the Judean royal court.

The Hittite Tavannana was the wife of a king and the mother of the heir to the throne, and as such played an important role in politics and religion. After the king’s death, she retained her status during the reign of her son, or sons, if two brothers occupied the throne in a succession. As in Judah, she could lose her title due to a serious transgression against the king or crown.<sup>24</sup> De Vaux speculates<sup>25</sup> that in Ugarit the mother of the reigning monarch could wield large power, as is suggested by her title *adath*, the female equivalent of *adon* (lord, ruler). Also Acadian texts from Ras Shamra speak of royal mothers mediating in political affairs. Numerous examples of women who were the mothers or wives of the reigning king are quoted by Niels-Erik Andreasen.<sup>26</sup> Their common denominator with the Judean *Gebira* is their elevated

<sup>20</sup> Ackerman 1993, 396.

<sup>21</sup> Ackerman 1993, 396–397. An image of a goddess mounting a lion and holding a serpent can be seen in many Canaanite and Egyptian relics; it is identified with the goddess Asherah.

<sup>22</sup> Cross 1973.

<sup>23</sup> Wallace 1985, 152–157.

<sup>24</sup> Gurney 1970, 88.

<sup>25</sup> De Vaux 1961, 118.

<sup>26</sup> Andreasen 1983, 179–194. The author steps outside the Near East and quotes examples of women in eastern and southern Africa.

status in the kingdom and associations with a religious cult. Such evidence confirms that mothers or wives of kings played a significant political part in many countries of the Near East. Bearing a title of their own, they were not mere passive observers of the country's political and religious life, but helped build it within the authorization afforded them by their position. Another case worth noting is that of those women in the Near East of whom we are not certain whether they held any official rank or owed their place in the state solely to their strength and charisma. Some we know by name, because their impact was sufficient to have been noted in sources. Without a doubt, the best known of them is Sammuamat, the wife of King Shamshi Adad V of Assyria. She played a significant role in the state when she exercised power on behalf of her underage son Adad Nirari III<sup>27</sup> and became a prototype for the Semiramis of the Greek legend. During the reigns of her husband and son, Assyria maintained its dominant position in the region. Zaki'a Nehuta, the wife of another Assyrian ruler, Sennacherib, caused her son Essarhaddon to ascend to the throne, and after his death helped her grandson Ashurbanipal.<sup>28</sup> During their reigns, she held considerable authority in the state, as indicated by her impact on royal succession, as neither of the above-named rulers was first in line for succession. Furthermore, King Nabonid of Babylonia rose to power through the influence and political talents of his mother Adad Guppi.<sup>29</sup>

Such examples prove that women in Near Eastern royal courts were more than passive bystanders. There is no reason to suppose that Judah differed much from other kingdoms in the region. Cultural intermingling due to trade, conquest, peaceful exchange, political marriages designed to bolster alliances – all these could lead to similar institutions and practices spreading throughout the Near East. Therefore, it cannot be ruled out that the Great Lady enjoyed powers about which Biblical authors are silent, but which were exercised by her equivalents in other countries. Perhaps co-deciding about succession was one of her rightful prerogatives.<sup>30</sup> The Old Testament mentions just two women as holding the title of the Great Lady, but it may be assumed that there were many more.

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<sup>27</sup> Lucknebill 1968, 264–265.

<sup>28</sup> Lewy 1952, 264–286.

<sup>29</sup> Wiseman 1987, 7–12.

<sup>30</sup> Ben-Barak 1991, 23–34.



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Michał Marciak

## STATTHALTER SAMARIAS ZUR PERSERZEIT. Streit um Sanballat II.\*

Der vorliegende Aufsatz setzt sich zum Ziel, die wichtigsten Informationen über das Amt des Statthalters Samarias zur Perserzeit zu erörtern, die man den Entdeckungen in Wadi Daliyeh verdankt.<sup>1</sup>

Die Samaria-Papyri belegen drei verschiedene Ämter der persischen lokalen Verwaltung in Samaria: Präfekt, Richter und Provinzstatthalter. Wir verfügen über 37 Papyri und 2 Siegel mit Inschriften, man muss aber dabei betonen, dass die meisten Texte in schlechtem Stand erhalten sind.<sup>2</sup> Z. B. enthält der größte Papyrus unter den Samaria-Papyri, WDSP 1, nur 48% des ursprünglichen Textes.<sup>3</sup> Da die Unterlagen jedoch ohne Ausnahmen rechtlichen Charakter haben, ist ihre Sprache schematisch. Diese Uniformität der Formelsprache hat zur Folge, dass sich größere Teile des Textes rekonstruieren lassen.<sup>4</sup> Die meisten Papyri enthalten Verkaufsverträge von Sklaven.<sup>5</sup> Diese Verträge bestehen grundsätzlich nur aus 4 Teilen.<sup>6</sup> Man kann also anhand der Lektüre aller Texte einen Eindruck bekommen, wo sich im Text bestimmte Informationen befinden. Wenn es um die Verwaltung Samarias geht, sind besonders hilfreich der erste und letzte Teil des Vertrages.<sup>7</sup> Im ersten Teil kann man nämlich den Ortsnamen, wo der Vertrag abgeschlossen wurde, und das Jahr des Abschlusses finden. Im letzten Teil kommt die Liste der Zeugen vor, die das Abschließen des Vertrages bestätigten.

Die Samaria-Papyri regten das Interesse vieler Forscher wegen ihrer Erwähnungen des wichtigsten Amtes der lokalen persischen Verwaltung, nämlich des Statthalters. Dieses Amt erscheint auf vier Texten: WDSP 7, 17, WDSP 8, 10, WDSP 11 r, 13, WD 22 und WD 23.

WDSP 7, 17 lautet<sup>8</sup>:

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\* Abkürzungen: WDSP – Wadi-Daliyeh-Samaria-Papyri; WD – Wadi-Daliyeh-Siegel. Dieser Aufsatz ist eine schriftliche Version des Referats, das im Forschungskolloquium an der Theologischen Fakultät der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in Jena vorgelegt und vorgetragen wurde. Mein Forschungsaufenthalt in Jena im Wintersemester 2008 war möglich dank der Unterstützung des DAAD. Ich danke Professor Uwe Becker (Lehrstuhl für Altes Testament, Jena) für seine Hilfe bei der Vorbereitung dieser Publikation.

<sup>1</sup> Siehe die einzige deutsche Übersetzung von WDSP 1 bei Zangenberg 1994, 298–299. Eine Einleitung in die Problematik der Entdeckungen kann man finden in Marciak 2000, 15–48.

<sup>2</sup> Gropp 2001, VII–VIII; Dušek 2007, 36–38.

<sup>3</sup> Gropp 2001, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Gropp 2001, 4–5.

<sup>5</sup> Dušek 2007, 65–66.

<sup>6</sup> Gropp 2001, 8–18; Dušek 2007, 67–104.

<sup>7</sup> Dušek 2007, 67–104; 441–445.

<sup>8</sup> Gropp 2001, 79–86; Dušek 2007, 199–213.

... נניה פחה שמרין ... was man als „(Cha/A)nanjah, Statthalter von Samaria“ verstehen kann. Der Kontext, in dem die Information über diesen Beamten gegeben wird, ist klar, der Statthalter (Cha/A)nanjah wurde unter den Zeugen des Vertrages erwähnt.<sup>9</sup> Der Papyrus enthält zugleich ein genaues Datum: der 5. Tag des Monats Adar des vierten Regierungsjahres von König Artaxerxes.<sup>10</sup> Bei der Annahme, dass wir mit Artaxerxes III. zu tun haben, ist das Datum als der 4. März 354 v. Chr. zu interpretieren.<sup>11</sup> Die Interpretation WDSP 7, 17 erweckt unter Forschern wenig Zweifel. Der Papyrus bestätigt die Historizität des Statthalters Samarias namens (Cha/A)nanjah, der um 354 v. Chr. lebte. F. M. Cross neigt eher dem Namen „Chananjah“ zu<sup>12</sup>, D. M. Gropp bevorzugt den Namen „Ananjah“<sup>13</sup> und J. Dušek akzeptiert beide Versionen.<sup>14</sup> Außerdem wurden zwei Münzen aus der Sammlung von Y. Meshorer und S. Qedar diesem Statthalter zugeschrieben.<sup>15</sup>

Dieselbe Gestalt kann man nach D.M. Gropp auf WDSP 9, 14 finden. Dieser Text enthält eine Zeugenliste, auf der von D.M. Gropp gelesen wird<sup>16</sup>: ... [נניה פחה שמרין] ... קרם .... Die Interpretation von J. Dušek ist anders und schließt den Bezug auf (Cha/A)nanjah aus: WDSP 7, 17: [... שמן] קרם. Buchstaben שמ bringen in dieser Interpretation den Anfang des Namens, den man näher nicht bestimmen kann, zum Ausdruck.<sup>17</sup>

WDSP 8, 10 enthält nur den gleichen Titel des Statthalters von Samaria ... [שמרין].<sup>18</sup> Auf dem Papyrus blieb kein Datum erhalten und J. Dušek schlägt nach dem paläographischen Kriterium die Periode um 350 oder 350–340 v. Chr. als Zeit, in der der Text entstand, vor.<sup>19</sup>

Dagegen lautet der Text auf WDSP 11 r, 13:

[יע בר סנבלט חנן סננא קוד/רין]

WDSP 11r in der Ausgabe von Gropp wird nur als ein Foto dargestellt.<sup>20</sup> Die erste vollständige Ausgabe führte J. Dušek durch.<sup>21</sup> Cross publizierte einige Male seine eigene Interpretation von diesem Papyrus.<sup>22</sup> Das Hauptproblem liegt darin, wie man die letzten zwei Buchstaben des ersten Wortes, die offensichtlich eine Endung des Namens bilden, ergänzen kann. F.M. Cross schlägt vor: ישוע oder ידוע.<sup>23</sup> Nach J. Dušek sind beide Interpretationen des Namens möglich, obwohl wahrscheinlicher der Name ישוע

<sup>9</sup> Gropp 2001, 83, 85; Dušek 2007, 211.

<sup>10</sup> Gropp 2001, 79; Dušek 2007, 200.

<sup>11</sup> Gropp 2001, 79; Dušek 2007, 200.

<sup>12</sup> Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4; Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Gropp 2001, 82.

<sup>14</sup> Dušek 2007, 211–212.

<sup>15</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 23, Nr. 37 und 38.

<sup>16</sup> Gropp 2001, 94–96.

<sup>17</sup> Dušek 2007, 237–238.

<sup>18</sup> Gropp 2001, 87–91; Dušek 2007, 214–226.

<sup>19</sup> Dušek 2007, 226.

<sup>20</sup> Gropp 2001, VIII, Plate XI.

<sup>21</sup> Dušek 2007, 248–265.

<sup>22</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 7; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 7; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4.

scheint, weil der Name ידוע in Texten aus Samaria (WDSP 15, 10.13) ohne *matres lectionis* vorkommt.<sup>24</sup>

Die letzten zwei Stellen, die Ausschlag für unsere Interpretation des Amtes Statthalters geben können, sind die Siegel WD 22 und WD 23.

Auf WD 22, die dem Papyrus WDSP 16 beigelegt worden ist, erscheint folgende Inskription<sup>25</sup>:

[ יהו בן ]בלט פחה שמור[ן]

In der ersten Zeile des Textes WDSP 16 blieb der letzte Buchstabe von dem Namen des Herrschenden erhalten – ש<sup>26</sup> Der Vertrag könnte in der Regierungszeit von Artaxerxes II. (404–359) sowie in der Regierungszeit von Artaxerxes III. (359–338) entstanden sein. Aus paläographischen Gründen hält J. Dušek das zweite Datum für wahrscheinlicher.<sup>27</sup>

F.M. Cross interpretiert den ersten Namen auf der Inskription WD 22 als [הננ]יהו oder [ידע]יהו oder [ישע]יהו, der nächste Name wird als [סנ]בלט identifiziert.<sup>28</sup>

Hinsichtlich WD 22, ist J. Dušek mit der Lesung Sanballat einverstanden, schlägt aber eine andere Interpretation für den ersten Namen vor, nämlich [לדל]יהו. Man kann überlegen, ob ihn dazu epigraphische oder eher historiographische Gründe bewogen haben.

Die Transkription und Übersetzung von WD 22 lauten nach J. Dušek<sup>29</sup>:

[לדל]יהו בן [סנא]בלט פחה שמור[ן]

[Appartenant à Dela]yahu, fils de (Sin`u)/ballit, gouverneur de Samar[ie]

Die Inskription auf WD 23 enthält nämlich nur drei Buchstaben: ...לי<sup>30</sup> Die Interpretation des Namens der Person, der WD 23 gehörte, ist in den Veröffentlichungen von F.M. Cross nicht eindeutig. Im Jahre 1963 entschied er sich für die Interpretation לישוע<sup>31</sup>, 1966 und 1974 bevorzugte die Form לידיוע.<sup>32</sup> M.J.W. Leith neigt zu der Interpretation des Namens auf WD 23, die von F.M. Cross 1963 vorgeschlagen wurde: לישיע.<sup>33</sup> Diese Lesung teilt ebenfalls J. Dušek.<sup>34</sup>

Wenn es zur historischen Interpretation kommt, gehen die Anschauungen der Cross School und J. Dušek weit voneinander. Die wesentlichsten und zugleich auch kontroversesten Interpretationen bringen WDSP 11 r, 13, WD 22 (und WD 23). Das erste Problem in der Interpretation der obigen drei Quellen beruht auf Ergänzung der letzten zwei Buchstaben des ersten Wortes WDSP 11 r, 13, die offensichtlich eine

<sup>24</sup> Dušek 2007, 262.

<sup>25</sup> Dušek 2007, 321–324.

<sup>26</sup> Dušek 2007, 316–317.

<sup>27</sup> Dušek 2007, 317.

<sup>28</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4; Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>29</sup> Dušek 2007, 329–332.

<sup>30</sup> Leith 1997, 184–187.

<sup>31</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Leith 1997, 184–187.

<sup>32</sup> Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1971, 47, F. 4; Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>33</sup> Leith 1997, 184–187.

<sup>34</sup> Dušek 2007, 51.

Endung des Namens bilden. F.M. Cross schlägt vor: ידוע oder ישיע<sup>35</sup>, den ersten Namen auf der Inschrift WD 22 interpretiert er als [הננ]יהו oder [ידע]יהו oder [ישע]יהו, der nächste Name wird als [סנ]בלט identifiziert.<sup>36</sup> Nach F.M. Cross : ידוע oder ישיע aus WDSP 11 r, 13 ist eine und dieselbe Gestalt wie [ישע]יהו oder [ידע]יהו auf WD 22 und WD 23 (eher als [הננ]יהו). Der Unterschied der Namen ergibt sich aus der gleichzeitigen Verwendung von zwei Namensformen – einer formalen (ישעיהו, ידעיהו) und einer gekürzten (ידוע, ישיע).<sup>37</sup> Der nächste Name auf WD 22 heißt Sanballat, derselbe, der auf WDSP 11 r, 13 bewiesen wurde. Die Interpretation des Namens der Person, der WD 23 gehörte, ist in den Veröffentlichungen von F.M. Cross nicht eindeutig. Im Jahre 1963 erklärte er sich für die Interpretation לישוע<sup>38</sup>, 1966 und 1974 bevorzugte er die Form לידוע. Immer noch geht es aber um dieselbe Person, die in WDSP 11 r, 13 und WD 20 belegt ist.<sup>39</sup> Die gesamte Interpretation der „Schule von Cross“ stellt ein einheitliches Bild der Verwaltung Samarias in der persischen Periode zusammen.<sup>40</sup> Nach dieser Hypothese beziehen sich WD 22 und WDSP 11 r, 13 auf die selbe Person, Sanballat, den Statthalter von Samaria, der in der ersten Hälfte des 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. lebte. Es konnte also nicht Sanballat der Horoniter sein, der aus dem Buch von Nehemia und aus den Texten aus Elephantine bekannt ist. Er lebte in der ersten Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr., und 407 v. Chr. lebte nicht mehr oder wurde in seiner Rolle durch seine Söhne Delajah und Shelemjah vertreten. Nach Cross belegen die Samaria-Texte weitere Namen der Beamten Samarias–Jeshu`a (Jesha`jahu, bzw. Jaddu`a/Jeda`jahu) auf WDSP 11 r, WD 22 und WD 23, Statthalter und Sohn von Sanballat II. aus WD 22 und WDSP 11 r, 13 und (Ch/A)nanjah, Präfekt (WDSP 11 r, 13) und endlich Statthalter von Samaria (WDSP 7, 17, WDSP 9, 14), der zugleich Bruder von Jeshu`a / Jesha`jahu und Sohn von Sanballat II. war. Dieser Vorschlag würde bedeuten, dass auch Sanballat (III.), von dem Flavius als von einem Zeitgenossen von Darius III. und Alexander dem Großen erzählt, eine historische Gestalt war. Nach diesen Erwägungen können zwei allgemeine Schlussfolgerungen gezogen werden. Erstens, zur Perserzeit war es üblich, die Söhne nach dem Namen des Großvaters zu nennen, der Brauch heißt „die Sitte der Papponymy“. Deshalb kann man unter Statthaltern Samarias drei Personen treffen, die den gleichen Namen Sanballat tragen. Zweitens, das Amt des Statthalters Samarias war in der persischen Periode de facto von den Vertretern derselben Familie geerbt. Cross nannte diese Familie „Sanballats Dynastie“. Die Liste der Statthalter in Samaria, die von der Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 4. Jahrhunderts tätig waren, enthält nach der Rekonstruktion von Cross folgende Gestalten: Sanballat I., Delajah, der Sohn von Sanballat I., Sanballat II., Jesha`jahu (oder Jeda`jahu), Chananjah, Söhne von Sanballat II., Sanballat III.

<sup>35</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 7; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1971, 47, Anm. 4; Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>37</sup> Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>38</sup> Cross 1963, 111, Anm. 2; Leith 1997, 184–187.

<sup>39</sup> Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1971, 47, F. 4; Cross 1974, 18, Anm. 10.

<sup>40</sup> Cross 1963, 111; Cross 1966, 204, Anm. 12; Cross 1975, 17; Cross 1974, 18; Cross 1988, 17, 19–20; Gropp 2001, 6, Anm. 7.

Hypothesen, die weit von den Bestimmungen der Schule von Cross und dem aktuellen Stand der Forschungen abgingen, schlug J. Dušek vor. Nach seiner Theorie sind beide Interpretationen des Namens auf WDSP 11 r, 13 möglich, obwohl wahrscheinlicher der Name ישוע scheint, weil der Name ידוע in Texten aus Samaria (WDSP 15, 10. 13) ohne *matres lectionis* vorkommt.<sup>41</sup> Außerdem kann man diese Person aus zwei Gründen nicht als Beamten betrachten. Erstens, ישוע oder ידוע wurde schon mit dem Namen des Vaters aufgezeigt und in Texten aus Daliyeh (WDSP 7, 17; 8, 10; 8, 12; 11 r, 13; 2, 10; 3, 10; 10, 10) wird diese Person entweder mit dem Namen des Vaters oder mit der Angabe des ausgeübten Amtes bestimmt.<sup>42</sup> Jedoch kommen beide Bezeichnungen nie gleichzeitig vor. Wenn ישוע oder ידוע als Sohn von Sanballat auftaucht, kann man nicht voraussetzen, dass er als ein Beamter vorkommt. Zweitens, J. Dušek lehnt die Konzeption von Gropp ab, dass ישוע oder ידוע als Beamter anerkannt werden soll, weil er den ersten Platz auf der Zeugenliste belegt. Nach der Meinung von J. Dušek scheint es nicht so zu sein, daß der Name wirklich als erster auf der Liste auftauchen würde.<sup>43</sup> Dazu stützt sich Gropps Meinung (die Zeugenliste eröffnet immer der Name des Statthalters und schließt sein Präfekt) *de facto* auf zwei Texte aus Samaria (WDSP 7, 17 und vielleicht WDSP 8, 10), wo solche Situation vorkommt.<sup>44</sup> Es soll außerdem bemerkt werden, dass der Name Sanballat auf WDSP 11 r, 13 auf keine Art und Weise näher bezeichnet wurde, und wenn ישוע oder ידוע kein Beamter ist, gibt es, nach J. Dušek, keine Grundlage dafür, ihn mit Sanballat aus WD 22 zu identifizieren.<sup>45</sup> Weiter widerspricht J. Dušek der These, die Münze Nr. 55 aus der Sammlung von Meshorer und Qedar als die von Sanballat, Samarias Statthalter im 4. Jh., zu identifizieren.<sup>46</sup> Seiner Meinung nach sollte man die Inschrift auf der Münze Nr. 55 als סנאבי („Sin ist mein Vater“) und nicht als סנאבל[ט] ablesen.<sup>47</sup>

Hinsichtlich WD 22, meint J. Dušek (anhand der Interpretation der Inschrift Nr. 28 von N. Avigad, B. Sass), dass sich der Terminus פחה auf die erste Person auf der Inschrift bezieht, auf [ישע]יהו oder [ידע]יהו oder [דל]יהו, und nicht auf סנאבל[ט].<sup>48</sup> Deshalb übten weder Sanballat aus WDSP 11 r, 13 noch Sanballat, nachgewiesen auf WD 22, eine amtliche Funktion aus, und es gibt keinen Grund, beide Gestalten zu identifizieren. J. Dušek schließt die Möglichkeit zwar nicht aus, dass sich der formelle Name (ישעיהו, ידעיהו) und gekürzte Name (ישוע, ידוע) auf dieselbe Person beziehen könnte. Er betont jedoch, dass es sich auch um zwei unterschiedliche Personen handeln könnte.<sup>49</sup> Die Transkription und Übersetzung von WD 22 lauten nach J. Dušek:

[לדל]יהו בן [סנא]בלט פחת שמו[ן]

[*Appartenant à Dela*]yahu, *filis de (Sin`u)/ballit, gouverneur de Samar[ie]*

Nach J. Dušek, דל יהו aus WD 22 ist Sohn von Sanballat, Samarias Statthalter. Beide Gestalten sind aus den Texten aus Elephantine bekannt.

<sup>41</sup> Dušek 2007, 262.

<sup>42</sup> Dušek 2007, 262–263.

<sup>43</sup> Dušek 2007, 262–263.

<sup>44</sup> Dušek 2007, 262–263.

<sup>45</sup> Dušek 2007, 263.

<sup>46</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 26–27, 93, Nr. 55.

<sup>47</sup> Dušek 2007, 322–324.

<sup>48</sup> Dušek 2007, 327.

<sup>49</sup> Dušek 2007, 328.

Zusammenfassend muss man bemerken, dass es nach der Meinung von J. Dušek in Texten aus Samaria nur drei Erwähnungen gibt, die sich ohne jeden Zweifel auf das Amt des Statthalters Samarias beziehen. Diese Erwähnungen befinden sich auf WDSP 7, 17; 8, 10; WD 22. WDSP 8, 10 enthält nur den Titel: „Statthalter von Samaria“, WDSP 7, 17 bestätigt die Historizität des Statthalters Samarias namens „(Ch/A)nanjah“, der sein Amt um die Hälfte des 4. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. ausgeübt hat. WD 22 gehört dagegen zu „Delajah“, Statthalter Samarias, Sohn von Sanballat, der auch in Texten aus Elephantine auftritt und sein Amt offensichtlich noch in der ersten Hälfte des 4. Jahrhunderts ausübte. Die Texte aus Daliyeh weisen also nicht die Historizität der Statthalter namens Sanballat oder Jeshajahu nach, die ihr Amt im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. ausüben sollten.

Es steht außer Frage, dass die Hypothesen von F. Cross von einer großen Menge unbewiesener Vermutungen geprägt sind. Die Identifizierung von zwei Namen, einem gekürzten und einem formalen, also die Zuschreibung zu derselben Person, bleibt eine reine Vermutung, die in Cross Auffassungen zweimal vorkommt:

- Chanan auf WDSP 7, 17 und (Ch/A)nanjah auf WDSP 11 r, 13;
- Jeshu`a oder Jaddu`a auf WDSP 11 r, 13 plus WD 23 und Jeshajahu oder Jedayahu auf WD 22.

Ansonsten wurde niemals Chanan (WDSP 11 r, 13) oder (Ch/A)nanjah (WDSP 7, 17) als Sohn Sanballats oder Bruder Jeshajahu genannt. Die Tatsache, dass Hanan als Präfekt in der Zeugenliste WDSP 7, 1 nebst Jeshua (Jaddua) Sohn Sanballats ausgezeichnet ist, reicht dazu ohne Zweifel nicht. Wir haben keine Belege für die Annahme, dass Ch/Ananjah, der zweifellos Statthalter Samarias war, ein Nachkomme von Sanballat I. oder II. war.

Es gibt keinen Grund für die Annahme, dass Sanballat, von dem Josephus Flavius im Kontext der Ankunft des Alexander des Großen erzählt,<sup>50</sup> eine historische Gestalt war. Die Flavius-Überlieferung ist dem heutigen Forschungsstand zufolge so fehlerhaft bzw. tendenziös,<sup>51</sup> dass man eigentlich daran zweifeln kann, ob sie irgendwelche korrekten Informationen enthält. Ansonsten kennt Flavius nur einen Sanballat.

Andererseits scheint J. Dušek dazu zu neigen, jeden Beleg infrage zu stellen, der seiner Hypothese im Wege steht und der solche Auffassungen wie z. B. die Sitte der „Papponymy“ (die sogar nicht unbedingt systematisch geübt worden wäre) oder numismatische Belege für die Historizität der Statthalter Samarias bestätigt. Erstens muss man sagen, dass seine Einstellung gegenüber numismatischen Zeugnissen unrealistisch und gleichzeitig inkonsequent ist. Das Hauptargument, das von J. Dušek in Bezug auf numismatische Funde benutzt wird, lautet: allein Namen (Abkürzungen der Namen), die auf Münzen auftreten, wenn sie von anderen Bezeichnungen nicht begleitet werden, z. B. von einem Beamtentitel, bezeugen noch nicht die Historizität der Personen, auch dann nicht, wenn sie vermutlich mit Gestalten zu identifizieren sind, die uns aus anderen Quellen bekannt sind.<sup>52</sup> Hier muss man bemerken, dass,

<sup>50</sup> *Ant.* 17, 297–298, 312.

<sup>51</sup> Forschungsstandüberblick bei Schwartz 1990, 189–92; Dušek 2007, 516–520.

<sup>52</sup> Dušek 2007, 529–537.

allgemein gesagt, Inschriften auf Münzen keine unterschiedlichen Bezeichnungen enthalten, zumeist geben sie doch nur eine Namensabkürzung oder eine andere Information wieder. In Bezug auf die uns bekannten Münzen aus Samaria<sup>53</sup> sind nur drei Gruppen Inschriften unter den Hebräisch-Aramäischen Inschriften zu nennen.<sup>54</sup> Die erste enthält geographische Namen, die zweite Namen von Personen oder Gottheiten, die dritte enthält „andere Inschriften“, die hauptsächlich aus einem oder ein paar Buchstaben bestehen und deren Bedeutung nicht klar ist. Griechische Inschriften geben auch nur die Namen von Personen oder Gottheiten wieder. Es ist wichtig zu bemerken, dass zwei Informationen in Inschriften normalerweise nicht gleichzeitig gegeben werden. Was wir aber von anderen Münzen zur Perserzeit wissen, ist die Tatsache, dass die Zahl der Personen, die ihre Namen auf Münzen eintragen durften, deutlich beschränkt ist. Die Münzen wurden von lokalen oder königlichen Behörden geprägt, im Falle der lokalen Behörden von obersten zivilen oder militärischen Behörden. Zu den ganz besonderen Ausnahmen gehört die Praxis, dass die Münzkünstler selbst ihren Namen eintrugen. Ansonsten kommen auf den Münzen nicht die vollständigen Namen vor, sondern zumeist ihre Abkürzungen.

Daher scheint es, dass wir im Falle der Interpretation der numismatischen Funde mit zwei diametral entgegengesetzten Auffassungen zu tun haben. Es gibt diejenigen, die jede Abkürzung, die man als einen Namen erweitern kann, als die Bestätigung eines Statthalters betrachten (A. Crown).<sup>55</sup> Hier geht es vor allem um den Namen Jeroboam, der oft auf Münzen vorkommt, aber gleichzeitig ist dieser Name eines Beamten Samarias aus anderen Quellen nicht bekannt.<sup>56</sup> Andererseits will J. Dušek nur diese numismatischen Belege anerkennen, die gleichzeitig Namen und Verwaltungstitel angeben. Hier muss man den zweiten Vorwurf gegen J. Dušek hinzufügen, dass er selbst sein numismatisches Kriterium nicht konsequent anwendet, denn er bezieht die Münzen Nr. 37 und 38<sup>57</sup> auf den Statthalter (Cha/A)nanjah,<sup>58</sup> obwohl sie keine weiteren Informationen als nur den Eigennamen angeben. Meines Erachtens ist die Lösung zwischen diesen zwei Tendenzen zu finden. Wir können eine Namensabkürzung als eine Bestätigung einer Gestalt betrachten, wenn diese Gestalt ebenfalls gut von anderen Quellen bekannt ist.

In Bezug auf Sanballat II., dessen Historizität J. Dušek in Zweifel zog, verfügen wir über Münzen, die vermutlich auf diese Gestalt zu beziehen sind. Wir haben vier Münzen, auf denen zwei Buchstaben „samech“ und „nun“ (oder „samech“ und „beth“) eingetragen wurden (51, 52, 53, 56).<sup>59</sup> Drei von ihnen (51, 52, 56) haben auf einer Seite typische Darstellungen vom persischen König,<sup>60</sup> was zwar nicht als Beweis, wohl aber als ein Hinweis betrachtet werden kann, dass es in diesem Falle um die Münzprägung der obersten zivilen Behörden innerhalb persischer Verwaltung geht. Darüber hinaus

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<sup>53</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1991; Meshorer/Qedar 1999.

<sup>54</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1991, 13–18; Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 17–31.

<sup>55</sup> Crown 1995, 146–147.

<sup>56</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1991, 14; Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 22–26.

<sup>57</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1991, 90, Nr 37 und 38.

<sup>58</sup> Dušek 2007, 531, 549.

<sup>59</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 26–27, 93.

<sup>60</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 93.



verfügen wir über die Münze Nr. 55,<sup>61</sup> die fünf Buchstaben in einer Reihe enthält: „samech“, „nun“, „aleph“, „beth“, „lamed“. Wenn wir einen Namen in diesen Buchstaben sehen, mangelt es dann nur an dem letzten Buchstaben, um einen vollständigen Namen, Sanballat, zu erhalten. Nach J. Dušek sollte man diese Inskription anders lesen: סנאבי („Sin ist mein Vater“) und nicht als סנאבל[ט].<sup>62</sup> Diese Interpretation ist höchstens problematisch aus zwei Gründen. Erstens, bestreitet J. Dušek nicht, dass sich sogar seine Lesung auf eine Person beziehen konnte, die den Namen Sanballat trug (expressis verbis, S. 531). Zweitens widerruft J. Dušek auf diese Art und Weise die Interpretation, die sich auf andere Parallelen stützen lässt, und schlägt eine neue Lesung vor, die einen neuen, völlig unbekannt Namen bietet, der keine Parallelen hat. Es scheint also, dass wir trotz Jan Dušeks Einwürfen einen guten numismatischen Beweis für die Historizität einer Gestalt haben, die zu den obersten Behörden Samarias in der ersten Hälfte des IV. Jahrhunderts gehörte.

Darüber hinaus muss man bemerken, dass Dušeks Interpretation von WD 22 nicht konsequent mit seinen Auffassungen über WDSP 11 r, 13 übereinstimmt. Bei seiner Interpretation von WDSP 11 bemerkt J. Dušek, dass in den Samaria-Papyri jede Person entweder mit dem Namen des Vaters oder mit der Angabe des ausgeübten Amtes bestimmt wird. Jedoch kommen beide Bezeichnungen nie gleichzeitig vor. Diese Regel beruht sich auf 7 Stellen innerhalb Samaria-Papyri. Wenn also Jeshu`a oder Jaddu`a auf diesem Papyri als Sohn Sanballats genannt wird, kann man nicht vermuten, dass er als ein Beamter zu bezeichnen ist. Gleichzeitig bezieht J. Dušek den Termin פחה auf WD 22 auf die erste Person auf der Inskription, auf [ישע]יהו oder [ידע]יהו oder [דל]יהו, und nicht auf סנא[בלט], obwohl Jeshu`jahu oder Jeda`jahu schon als Sohn Sanballats genannt wurde. Die Vermutung, dass der Titel, der nach zwei Namen vorkommt, auf die erste Person und nicht auf die zweite Person zu beziehen ist, begründet J. Dušek mit Hinweis auf die gleiche Praxis von Avigad und Sass in ihrer Siegelinschriftensammlung. Der Text lautet:

לחנן בן חלקיהו הכהן

Hier kann sich J. Dušek jedoch nur auf ein Beispiel berufen. Darüber hinaus wurde diese Lesung von Avigad und Sass nicht begründet. Wenn wir schon der Regel von J. Dušek folgen sollten, würden wir dieser folgen, die von mehreren Belegen begründet wird. Ansonsten können wir immer prüfen, ob man analoge Wendungen in anderen Textsammlungen, z. B. in der Bibel, finden kann. Natürlich haben wir in diesem Fall mit einem anderen literarischen Korpus zu tun, dessen literarischer Gebrauch aber als Analogie benutzt werden kann, besonders wenn er mehr Gebrauchsbeispiele enthält. Das Wort פחה im *status constructus* erscheint 19 Mal in der Bibel (2 Ki 18:24; Ezr 2:6; 5:3, 5:14, 6:6, 6:7, 6:13, 8:4; 10:30; Neh 3:7, 11; 7:11; 10:15; Isa 36:9; Jer 48:28; Hag 1:1, 14; 2:2, 21), drei Stellen scheinen vergleichbar mit dem Gebrauch auf WD 22 zu sein (Hag 1:1, 14; 2:2).

<sup>61</sup> Meshorer/Qedar 1999, 93.

<sup>62</sup> Dušek 2007, 322–324.

Hag 1:1: אל־זרבבל בן־שאלתיאל פחת יהודה ואל־יהושע בן־יהוצרק הכהן הגדול

Hag 1:14: ויער יהוה את־רוח זרבבל בן־שלת־אל פחת יהודה ואת־רוח יהושע בן־יהוצרק הכהן הגדול

Hag 2:2: אמר־נא אל־זרבבל בן־שלת־אל פחת יהודה ואל־יהושע בן־יהוצרק הכהן הגדול

In allen diesen Fällen ist der Titel, sowohl פחה יהודה als auch הכהן הגדול, auf die erste Person im Vers und nicht auf die zweite, auf den Sohn und nicht auf den Vater zu beziehen. Daher sollte man annehmen, dass sich der Titel פחה auf WD 22 auf die erste Person bezieht, auf [ישע]־יהו oder [ידע]־יהו oder [דל]־יהו, und nicht auf [כנא]־בלט. Trotzdem wurde eine Schwierigkeit nicht aus dem Wege geräumt. Es bleibt ungeklärt, wieso dieser Statthalter auf WD 22 mit dem Namen seines Vaters angesprochen wurde, obwohl diese Praxis im Korpus der Texte und Inschriften aus Daliyeh eine Ausnahme ist. Wir können annehmen, dass die Person des Vaters eine wichtige und bekannte Gestalt war, auf die man sich berufen wollte.

Zusammenfassend verfügen wir über einen guten numismatischen Beweis, dass eine Gestalt namens Sanballat in der ersten Hälfte des IV. Jahrhunderts vor Chr. lebte. Man prägte Münzen im Namen dieser Person, was beweist, dass sie zu obersten Behörden Samarias gehörte. In diesem Falle konnte es um einen Statthalter, einen obersten Heerführer oder einen Hohenpriester (wie im Falle einiger Münzen aus Judäa)<sup>63</sup> gehen. Da wir nichts von den beiden zuletzt genannten Behörden in Samaria zu dieser Zeit wissen, bleibt die einzige Möglichkeit, dass Sanballat II. das Amt des Statthalters ausübte.

Wir müssen auch bemerken, dass das Zeugnis der Samaria-Papyri nicht eindeutig ist. Welche Lesung den Vorrang hat, ist es schwer zu entscheiden, da zumeist alternative Lesungsmöglichkeiten nicht ausgeschlossen sind. Es scheint, dass wir zumindest dessen relativ sein können, dass es auf WD 22 um denselben Sanballat geht, der von numismatischen Funden her belegt ist. Dafür spricht die Tatsache, dass das Erscheinen des Namens Sanballat in diesem Kontext eine Ausnahme zu sein scheint. Andere Fragen bleiben offen und ein Versuch, sie in dem heutigen Forschungszustand zu beantworten, ist auf zu viele reine Vermutungen angewiesen.

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<sup>63</sup> Barag 1986/87, 4–21.

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Przemysław Dec

## THE MATERIAL AND TEXTUAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE 1QH<sup>A</sup> COL. 8 (+ FRAGM. 12)

### Introduction

The first Scroll Hymns edition [1QH<sup>a</sup>] by Eliezer Lipa Sukenik has been the basis of various translations into modern languages for a long time.<sup>1</sup> Although Józef Tadeusz Milik proposed that another reconstruction of the scroll should be made, it was not put into effect.<sup>2</sup> It was not until the end of the sixties when Jacob Licht admitted that after Professor Sukenik had died in 1952, he tried to combine the unidentified draft version of the fragments.<sup>3</sup> Yet, Nahaman Avigad, who was then responsible for the publication of the scrolls insisted on the edition being finalized. At the end of the sixties (between 1958 and 1959) attempts were being made by Jean Carmignac to incorporate some the fragments [fragm. 15, 18 and 22] and the results of the research turned out to be useful later on reconstruction.<sup>4</sup>

It was Hartmut Stegemann who was the largest scale reconstruction 1QH<sup>a</sup> author. The achievement had been made in his unpublished doctoral dissertation in 1962, and – with the assistance of Yigael Yadin – he continued his efforts also later.<sup>5</sup> Apart from Stegemann small parts of Hodayot were dealt with by Emil Puech.<sup>6</sup> The outcome of both examinations were similar. Stegemann had never stopped working upon the unclassified fragments. Hence the research has been regularly updated with new publications.

One should point out the Stegamann's research was, for the most part, a papyrological reconstruction and he never ventured to make a complete official Hodayot text edition [1QH<sup>a</sup>].

### Introductory Remarks

The Column 8 (according to Sukenik's edition col. 16) includes since the time of Licht edition fragment 13. That kind of text arrangement has been the basis of all

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<sup>1</sup> Sukenik 1954.

<sup>2</sup> Schuller 1993, 605 ss.

<sup>3</sup> Licht (1957) tried to take his results into account in his own Hodayot edition. For further details, see Stegemann 2000, 273.

<sup>4</sup> Carmignac 1958, 139–155; 1958–1959, 425–430.

<sup>5</sup> Stegemann 2000, 273–274.

<sup>6</sup> Puech 1988a, 38–55; 1988b, 59–88.

translations and comments available. Although the last corrections were made by Stegemann, it was Puech who incorporated fragment 12 into column 8. Yet, he did not identify the exact place in the column as for according to the line. It was Stegemann who ultimately made it.

An identification of the original *locus* fragment 12 in column 8 seems to be correct. It is confirmed by considerable physical decrease of the upperparts of the parchment in column 4–8. They were the outer part of coil scroll and got damaged relatively quickly. The preserved charts make it possible to locate only the upper right part of the column. One should also point out that the column 8 has no parallels Hodayot text from the columns.

All the translations hitherto existing have taken on a false variant of line numbering within the whole scroll. Generally, the first line which has been preserved intact in each column is marked as “1”. It causes many inconsistencies. For example, two or three columns which are in one body have different line numbering in the same horizontal arrangement. Hence the same numbering of both column 8 and the other ones in the Hymns Scroll [1QH<sup>a</sup>].

### **Physical Description of Fragment 12**

Fragment 12 belongs to the severely damaged group. It is oval and irregular in shape approximately  $6 \times 5$  cm.<sup>7</sup> Its relatively small area suffered from, among other things, hygroscopic changes, i.e. external impact. Hence the dark brown color of the parchment. Its superficial damage is extensive. Still, it is possible to interpret letters and complete words in all seven lines.



### **Fragment 12 – Text**

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<sup>7</sup> See facsimile: Sukenik 1954, 56; *Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library, (Non-Biblical Texts)*, Leiden 1999 (eds. E. Tov).

In my opinion Sukenik's interpretation is not quite precise, hence I try to do slight corrections. The line numbering only concerns to fragment 12.

1 [...]קדש [ב]ל יטה[ר] לא[ש]... לִי...]

In Hodajot the particle lb sometimes occurs in verbal phrases in imperfect, e.g.:

– בל יבוא [1QH<sup>a</sup> 14,28.35]

– בל ימוטו [1QH<sup>a</sup> 14,27]

The last letters in phrase – יטה have not been preserved but only as far as the root of the verb [root] יטה is concerned. In all likelihood, it is *qal imperfectum 3 pers. singularis*, as in the damaged place the restitution allows for only one letter. It is confirmed by the further context in the form of לאש *nota dativi*.

Further down the line only some letters are legible.

2 [...]עד עולם [...]יקום און...]

Sukenik read this fragment as קור<sup>8</sup> but the last letter is badly damaged. The preserved part does not graphically correspond to r but to early Herodian m finales. A longitudinal vertical line can be seen in front of ק, which indicates ו or י. It is likely that *imperfectum* form יקום is actually syntactic correlated with the noun און.

3 [...]ולהקדשו [כפי] כל מעש[יו] מל...]

The interpretation ולהקדשו *infinitivus absolutus hifil* is unquestionable. The net word is identified as כפי.<sup>9</sup> In my opinion, the context that follows calls for a comparative particle, hence כפי. The identified כ shows a clear distinction concerning the typical characteristics of the horizontal upper line ב in 1QH<sup>a</sup>.

The damaged letters are the ones in the preserved section מעש. The trace which has been preserved can be restored according to the context as plural מעשיו with third person suffix.

4 [...]לם ורוח עורף ק... לדממה...]

The expression עורף רוח has no analogy in non-biblical Qumran text and Hebrew Bible. In Dt 32,2 עורף serves to illustrate raindrops flowing down a rock. Sukenik read the last word partly as לדממה.<sup>10</sup> In my interpretation it is a noun לדממה in *nota dativi*, which exactly correlates with the previous expression.

<sup>8</sup> Sukenik 1954, 56.

<sup>9</sup> Sukenik 1954, 56.

<sup>10</sup> Sukenik 1954, 56.

5 ...]...[ש[...]

The verb *אין* in *hifil infinitivus* להאזין means “to prick up your eyes” or “to listen intently to something”. The beginning of the line points to the existence of two letters but the extent of the damage makes any identification impossible.

6 ...]...[ו[...]

Sukenik read only ו[...but because of the subsequent context there is no doubt that it must be the noun ורוח, which is preceded by a conjunction ו. As far as the last word is concerned Sukenik suggests מעיל, but that is an incorrect reading<sup>11</sup>. The מ letter is followed by a partly damaged ש. In Hodayot the expression רוח נעוה sometimes occurs with a predicate משלה [1QH<sup>a</sup> 5,21], hence the reading משלה I put forward.

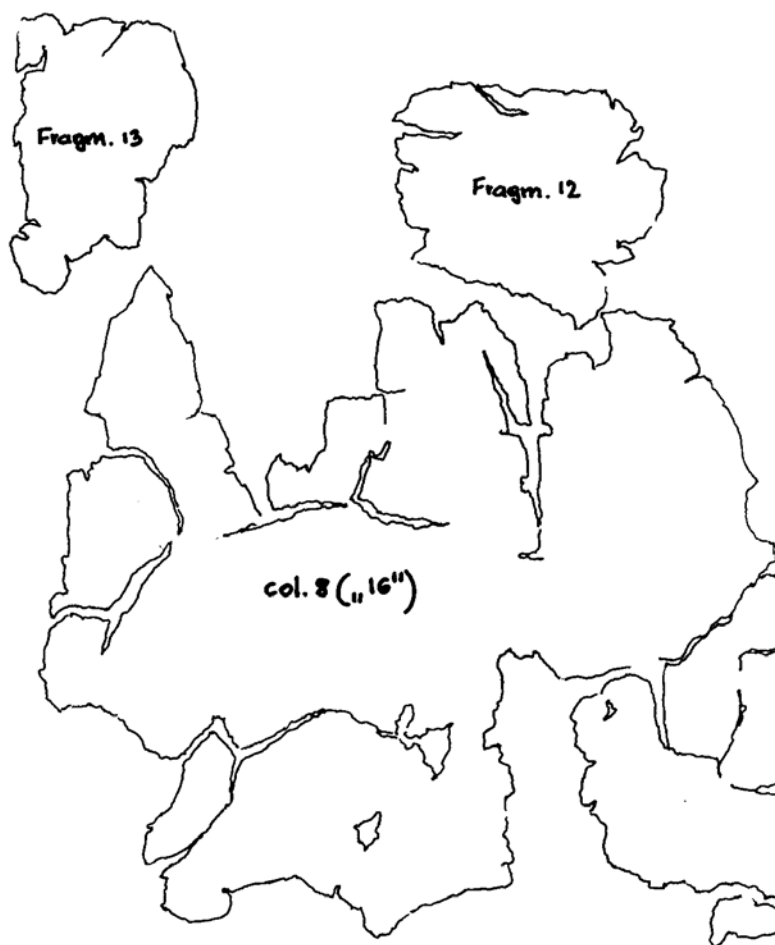
7 ...]...[...]

Only one letter has been preserved intact. The line is almost completely damaged.

### Column 8 – Reconstruction

The column shown below constitutes the compilation “col. 16” from Sukenik edition and fragment 12 and 13. In accordance with the proposition put forward by Stegemann, fragment 12 belongs to the upper right-hand side of the column and, according to the corrected numbering, corresponds with the lines 12–20. In the lines 12–16 it corresponds with the fragment 13 which belongs to the left part of the column.

<sup>11</sup> Sukenik 1954, 56.



<sup>12</sup> [...] כולו [...] ו[...]  
 ..שפוח] הביא במספר  
 ..אמנ]חו בשמים ובאר[ץ...

[...] ות ובירך משפט כול[ם]

[...] 1  
 [...] 2  
 [...] 3  
 [...] 4  
 [...] 5  
 [...] 6  
 [...] 7  
 8  
 9  
 10  
 11

<sup>12</sup> Lines 8–11 on fragm.13; lines 12–16 on fragm. 13 + 12.



12	[... קדש בל ישה[ר] לא[ש]... ל <sup>13</sup> וע <sup>13</sup>	[... קדש בל ישה[ר] לא[ש]... ל <sup>13</sup> וע <sup>13</sup>
13	[... עד עולם [... יקום אין ...]	[... עד עולם [... יקום אין ...]
14	[... ולהקדשו [כפי] כל מעש[י]... מל [...]	[... ולהקדשו [כפי] כל מעש[י]... מל [...]
15	[... לם ורוח עורף ק <sup>15</sup> לדממ[ה]...]	[... לם ורוח עורף ק <sup>15</sup> לדממ[ה]...]
16	[... להאזין קול נכבוד[ש] ...]	[... להאזין קול נכבוד[ש] ...]
17	[... ורוח נעה משלה <sup>15</sup> ...]	[... ורוח נעה משלה <sup>15</sup> ...]
18	[... מ[...]	[... מ[...]
19	ברוח קו[דש]... <sup>16</sup> ...]	ברוח קו[דש]... <sup>16</sup> ...]
20	רוח קוד[ש]... <sup>17</sup> מלוא ה[ש]מים [וה] ארץ [...]	רוח קוד[ש]... <sup>17</sup> מלוא ה[ש]מים [וה] ארץ [...]
21	ואדעה כי ברצו[נ]ך... <sup>18</sup> באיש הרביתה [...]	ואדעה כי ברצו[נ]ך... <sup>18</sup> באיש הרביתה [...]
22	ומעמד צדק א <sup>19</sup> ... <sup>19</sup> אשר הפקדתה בו פן י <sup>19</sup> ט <sup>19</sup> ...	ומעמד צדק א <sup>19</sup> ... <sup>19</sup> אשר הפקדתה בו פן י <sup>19</sup> ט <sup>19</sup> ...
23	בדעתי ככול אלה [א]מצ[א]ה מענה <sup>20</sup> לשון [ה]תנ[פ]ל ולהת[...]	בדעתי ככול אלה [א]מצ[א]ה מענה <sup>20</sup> לשון [ה]תנ[פ]ל ולהת[...]
24	להתחוק ברוח קו[דש]... <sup>21</sup> ולדבוק באמת ברי[ת]ך [ול]עבד[ך] באמת ולב שלם ולאהוב את [...]	להתחוק ברוח קו[דש]... <sup>21</sup> ולדבוק באמת ברי[ת]ך [ול]עבד[ך] באמת ולב שלם ולאהוב את [...]
25	ברוך אתה אדוני יוצר <sup>22</sup> [הע]צה ור[ב] העלילתה אשר מעשיך הכול הנה הואלתה לעש[ות] ע[בד]ך	ברוך אתה אדוני יוצר <sup>22</sup> [הע]צה ור[ב] העלילתה אשר מעשיך הכול הנה הואלתה לעש[ות] ע[בד]ך
26	ותחונני ברוח רחמיך וב[...] <sup>23</sup> ור[ב] כבודך לך אתה הצדקה כי אתה עשית את כול א[ל]ה	ותחונני ברוח רחמיך וב[...] <sup>23</sup> ור[ב] כבודך לך אתה הצדקה כי אתה עשית את כול א[ל]ה
27	ובדעתי כי אתה רשמת[ה] רוח צדיק ואני בחרתי להבר כפי כרצו[נ]ך ונפש עבדך ת[עב]ב[ך] כול	ובדעתי כי אתה רשמת[ה] רוח צדיק ואני בחרתי להבר כפי כרצו[נ]ך ונפש עבדך ת[עב]ב[ך] כול
28	מעשה עולה ואדעה כי לא יצדק איש מבלעדך ואחלה פניך ברוח נתת [בי] <sup>24</sup> להשלים	מעשה עולה ואדעה כי לא יצדק איש מבלעדך ואחלה פניך ברוח נתת [בי] <sup>24</sup> להשלים
29	חס[ך]... <sup>25</sup> עם עבדך [לעול]ם לשהרני ברוח קודשך ולהנישני ברצונך כנודל חסדיך [...]	חס[ך]... <sup>25</sup> עם עבדך [לעול]ם לשהרני ברוח קודשך ולהנישני ברצונך כנודל חסדיך [...]
30	ע[מ]די <sup>26</sup> ... <sup>26</sup> [מעמד] רצ[ונ]ך אשר בה[ר]תה לאוהביך ולשומרי מ[צו]תך	ע[מ]די <sup>26</sup> ... <sup>26</sup> [מעמד] רצ[ונ]ך אשר בה[ר]תה לאוהביך ולשומרי מ[צו]תך
31	לפניך [לעו]לם [... אל] התערב ברוח עבדך [וב] כול מעש[ו]י ל...	לפניך [לעו]לם [... אל] התערב ברוח עבדך [וב] כול מעש[ו]י ל...
32	ועי <sup>27</sup> ... <sup>27</sup> ואל יה[יה] לפניו כול נגע מכשול מחוקי בריחך כי...	ועי <sup>27</sup> ... <sup>27</sup> ואל יה[יה] לפניו כול נגע מכשול מחוקי בריחך כי...
33	פ[ני]ך ואד[עה]... [ורחום א]ר[ו]ך א[פ]ים ו[ר]ב חסד ואמת ונושא פשע [...]	פ[ני]ך ואד[עה]... [ורחום א]ר[ו]ך א[פ]ים ו[ר]ב חסד ואמת ונושא פשע [...]
34	[ונחם] על [...] <sup>28</sup> ושומ[רי] מ[צו]ת[ך]... [וה]שבים אליך באמונה ולב שלם [...]	[ונחם] על [...] <sup>28</sup> ושומ[רי] מ[צו]ת[ך]... [וה]שבים אליך באמונה ולב שלם [...]
35	לעובדך [...] <sup>29</sup> טוב בעי[ני]ך אל חשב [פני] עבדך [...]	לעובדך [...] <sup>29</sup> טוב בעי[ני]ך אל חשב [פני] עבדך [...]
36	[ה] ואני על דבריך קרב[תי]... <sup>30</sup>	[ה] ואני על דבריך קרב[תי]... <sup>30</sup>
38		
39		

<sup>13</sup> Licht 1957, 239; [...][נחשבו] Sukenik 1954, 56; נחשבו.

<sup>14</sup> Dupont-Sommer 1957, 112; ברצונך יהיו.

<sup>15</sup> Lines 17–18 only fragm. 12.

<sup>16</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 156; קודשך; Dupont-Sommer 1957, 93.

<sup>17</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 156; Holm-Nielsen 1960, 234; קודשך; Licht 1957, 201;

ביא קודשך.

<sup>18</sup> Licht 1957, 202; Dupont-Sommer 1957, 94; רצונכה.

<sup>19</sup> Licht 1957, 202; אמתכה.

<sup>20</sup> Dupont-Sommer 1957, 94; אני מענה.

<sup>21</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 156; קודשך.

<sup>22</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 156; נודל; Licht 1957, 203; נוצר.

<sup>23</sup> Mansoor 1961, 186; וחוד; Licht 1957, 203; וביסוד; Dupont-Sommer 1957, 94; ובהוד.

<sup>24</sup> García Martínez 1997, 156; Licht 1957, 204; Mansoor 1961, 186; בי.

<sup>25</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 156; Delcor 1962, 277; Mansoor 1961, 186; חסדיך.

<sup>26</sup> Licht 1957, 277; מרני.

<sup>27</sup> Licht 1957, 204; לשומרו מהוות רשעים לחזקו ככול דרכיו.

<sup>28</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 158; רעת אוהביך; Mansoor 1961, 187; עבדיך אהבך.

<sup>29</sup> García Martínez, E.J.C. Tigchelaar 1997, 158; ולעשות; Dupont-Sommer 1957, 95; Mansoor 1961, 187;

ולעשות את הטוב.

<sup>30</sup> Holm-Nielsen 1960, 239; קראתי לשמך; Dupont-Sommer 1957, 96; קראתי לך; Licht 1957, 205; קרבתי.

## Translation

1. [...]
2. [...]
3. [...]
4. [...]
5. [...]
6. [...]
7. [...]
8. ...] all [...]
9. [mouth] He lead into the number
10. his truth] in Haven and on the earth [...]
11. ...] in your hand is judgment of them all [...]
12. ...] Holy. He will not be purified by fire [...] your. And what will he think [...]
13. ...] for ever [...] and the strength will stand up [...] and he will not do the all [...]
14. ...] and you will consecrate him according to his deeds [...] and for you council you will appoint
15. and spirit is flowing [...] by blood [...] with [...]
16. ...] to hear a respected voice [...] my God [...]
17. ...] and spirit of perversity rules [...]
18. ...] [...]
19. ...] in your holy spirit [...] he cannot [...]
20. your holy spirit [...] fills up heaven and the earth [...] your glory fills up all [...]
21. I know that in your kindness [...] towards man you multiplied [...] your truth in all [...]
22. and the service of justice [...] which you put on him, lest [...]
23. Since I know all these I want to get possession a reply of tongue and [...] my offence [...] and to claim a spirit
24. to be strengthened by your holy spirit and to be adhered to the truth of your covenant and to serve you in truth, with undisturbed heart and to love [...]
25. Be blessed, Lord, forming intentions and mighty in works, all the acts are yours. Here you resolved to treat your serve
26. with kind and you had mercy to me by the spirit of you mercy. Your glory [...] To you belongs righteousness, because you made it all.
27. Since I understand that you recorded spirit of righteousness, I chose purity with accordance to your will, and soul of your servant will purify
28. all acts of iniquity. And I know there is no one besides you is just. I will appease your countenance by spirit you have given me to fulfill
29. your kindness on your servant forever, to purify with your holy spirit and to bring me by your will, according to your kindness [...] and to do
30. [...] with me [...] the authority of your will which you have chosen for them who love you and observe your commandments
31. in your presence forever [...] to unit with the spirit of your servant and his all deeds [...]
- 32 [...] and there is no misfortune which let him fall down because of regulation of your covenant and [...]

33. your face and I know [...] you are merciful and slow to anger and full of kindness and truth, who annihilate iniquity [...]
34. compassionate on [...] and keep your commandments [...] those who turn to you with faithfulness and a perfect heart [...]
35. to serve you [...] good in your eyes. Do not turn away your face from your servant [...] son of your truth [...]
36. [...] and me through your words I have come up [...]
37. [...]
38. [...]
39. [...].

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**THE JEWISH PRESENCE IN CYPRUS BEFORE AD 70**

In the time of Sergius Paulus (Acts 13, 7), Cyprus was inhabited by indigenous Cypriots, Greeks (from Greece and Egypt), Phoenicians, some Romans (few in comparison with other groups), and a large community of Jews. What is surprising is the almost total absence of Greek (or Aramaic) synagogue inscriptions, especially since we know from the Acts of the Apostles and other sources that a substantial group of people of Jewish origin was living on the island.<sup>1</sup>

G. Hill<sup>2</sup> and T. B. Mitford<sup>3</sup> suggested some decades ago that the first Jews settled in Cyprus in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. According to the Talmudic sources, they were very probably obliged to supply wine annually for the services in the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>4</sup> However, today we are able to date the first Jewish settlers as early as the fourth century BC. Found in ancient Kition were three Phoenician inscriptions with evidently Jewish names: Haggai, son of Azariah, and Asaphyahu.<sup>5</sup> Commercial contacts are later confirmed by finds of Hasmonaean coins in Nea Paphos.<sup>6</sup> The first epigraphical proof is provided by a Greek inscription from Kourion of a late Hellenistic date, where a Jew named Onias is mentioned.<sup>7</sup> The next attestation of Jews, also of the late Hellenistic or early Roman period, comes from a text dealing with permanent habitation of Jews in Amathus. According to Mitford the text seems to concern “the construction in cedar wood of the doorway of a synagogue” in that city.<sup>8</sup> If the Jews built a synagogue, they had a community there. Herodian coins appear in the early Roman stratum in Nea Paphos.

Literary sources also confirm the habitation of Jews in the second century BC. This is indirectly confirmed by a letter from the Roman consul Lucius Calpurnius Piso (in office in 138 BC) to the king of Egypt, Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (Physkon) (146–116 BC). A copy was also sent to Cyprus. The text, as reported in the 1st Book of Maccabees (15, 15), stated Roman protection over the Jewish settlers in numerous

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<sup>1</sup> The relatively high number of Jews on Cyprus is supported indirectly but seriously by descriptions of their rebellion in 115/116 AD (Dio Cassius, LXVIII, 32, 2–3). Cf. also Reifenberg 1932, 209–211 and, van der Horst 2006, 28–32.

<sup>2</sup> Hill 1949, 241 note 4.

<sup>3</sup> Mitford 1990, 2204.

<sup>4</sup> Jerusalem Talmud, *Yoma* IV.5. Cf. Neubauer 1868, 369; Oberhummer 1903, 23–24. About the Jewish population in Cyprus, cf. also Roth 1972, 1181.

<sup>5</sup> Hadjisavvas, Dupont-Sommer, Lozachmeur 1984, 101–116; Noy, Bloedhorn 2004, 223–226. P.W. van der Horst (2006, 78) appears not to be definitely convinced about the fourth century BC presence of Jews on the island but agrees that the names in question “seem to contain Yahwistic names.”

<sup>6</sup> Cox 1959, 25–26, no. 191–200.

<sup>7</sup> Mitford 1971, 133, no. 70.

<sup>8</sup> Mitford 1990, 2204 and note 146 (quoting RDAC 1968, 77, no. 8).

kingdoms, provinces and free cities. What is more, the receivers from the Eastern Mediterranean were instructed not to fight with Jews and to send back Jewish criminals who escaped from Judaea to their king, Simon the Maccabee, a friend of Rome, for punishment.<sup>9</sup> The Jewish settlers in Cyprus were under the protection of Rome despite the direct subjugation of the island to the Ptolemies.

Much information about the Jews in Cyprus comes from the works of Josephus. Writing about the times of the rule of Ptolemy IX Soter (142–180 BC), he states emphatically that the Jewish community in Cyprus was in “a flourishing condition,” like the Jews in Jerusalem, the Judean countryside and Alexandria.<sup>10</sup> In Egypt the Jewish community had been supplying mercenaries; for example, Josephus describes their cooperation with Ptolemy’s mother, Cleopatra III, who, fighting with her son in 106/105 BC,<sup>11</sup> organized a military expedition of Jewish troops headed by her trusted generals Chelkias and Ananias.<sup>12</sup>

The generals mentioned, Chelkias and Ananias, were the leaders of Jewish troops from the Heliopolis district in Egypt, where Onias IV built a temple similar to the Jerusalem temple around 160 BC, on the ruins of an old Egyptian sanctuary in Leontopolis.<sup>13</sup> The Jews were very loyal mercenaries, and Cleopatra fully trusted both generals. But the fact that a Jewish expedition to Cyprus took place means even more for P.W. van der Horst. In his opinion, this fact “confirm[s] the impression that the island had a large Jewish presence in the last decades of the second century BCE.”<sup>14</sup> However, from the quoted report of Strabo it is not even clear if the expedition was successful. Most probably it was not. Ptolemy Lathyros evacuated from Cyprus and part of the army followed him, taking up the cause of Cleopatra’s son. From Josephus’ transmission it is only evident that some of the queen’s troops, the Jewish ones, remained faithful to Cleopatra, “because their countrymen Chelkias and Ananias were in chief favor with the queen.”<sup>15</sup> The next verse of Josephus unfortunately resumes the history of John Hyrcanus, and we do not know the subsequent events.

In connection with this episode it is worth recalling that W.O.E. Oesterley, back in 1930, stressed the influence of the general on the international policy of their queen. Even after Chelkias’ death in a battle in Phoenicia, some years after the fighting in Cyprus, Ananias was able to persuade the queen to keep peace with John Hyrcanus during her campaign in Palestine against her son.<sup>16</sup> The generals were certainly great military leaders of their time and clever advisers to their queen, but connecting their names with the Jewish “large presence” in Cyprus is a risky suggestion. We simply do not have sources to support that view.

<sup>9</sup> Concerning the letter, see 1 Macc. 15: 15–24. Cyprus is mentioned in 15, 23. Cf. Gryglewicz 1961, 207–209; Goldstein 1979, 499–500.

<sup>10</sup> *Ant.* 13, 284.

<sup>11</sup> The date following Kyrris (1996, 135).

<sup>12</sup> *Ant.* 13, 287. A general political background of these events is briefly presented in Witkowski 1938, 180–182.

<sup>13</sup> Concerning Onias IV, cf. Rappaport 1992, 24.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. his article *The Jews in Ancient Cyprus* (Horst 2006, 26).

<sup>15</sup> *Ant.* 12, 287 (Cf. Whiston 1987, 354).

<sup>16</sup> Oesterley 1932, 290–291, quoting Josephus, *Ant.* 13, 354.

The next mentions in Josephus, again in his *Antiquitates*, concern Alexandra, who was the daughter of Phasaelus II and Salampsio, and the granddaughter of Herod the Great. She married Timios, an important figure from Cyprus, supposed to have been of Jewish origin.<sup>17</sup> It is highly probable that this marriage had a special economic background to it. In the year 13/12 BC Herod the Great, ending his visit to the emperor, received a special privilege from Augustus: “Herod made him [Augustus] a present of three hundred talents, and he was then exhibiting shows and largesses to the people of Rome: and Caesar made him a present of half of the revenue of the copper mines in Cyprus, and committed the care of the other half to him, and honored him with other gifts and incomes.”<sup>18</sup> J. Ciecieląg is ready to accept the view that there is a connection between the event described here and the marriage of Alexandra: “We may suggest,” he says, “that Timios, a representative of the local aristocracy, was appointed the king’s procurator of the mines, which means that Alexandra probably lived in Cyprus with her husband.”<sup>19</sup> The output of the mines was certainly of such great value that Herod the Great’s decision to offer his granddaughter to Timios would be explicable.<sup>20</sup>

Josephus’ information about the exchange of gifts between Herod and Augustus has been discussed only relatively rarely.<sup>21</sup> In many recent biographies of Herod the Great it is not even mentioned. This is the case in the new Schürer,<sup>22</sup> the monograph by Schalit,<sup>23</sup> the article on the wealth of Herod the Great,<sup>24</sup> etc.<sup>25</sup> This is disappointing, as the profit from the Cypriot mines certainly enriched the king, who developed such an extensive building program<sup>26</sup> and certainly had many expenses besides that; suffice it to mention his generous gifts to dozens of cities abroad. He maintained a strong army and a large court at home. There is no doubt that he oppressed his subjects and imposed numerous heavy taxes. However, the peace which he offered to the inhabitants of Judaea, followed by the notable irrigation projects in the oasis of Jericho, the Golan and the Hauran areas, export of such rare goods as balsam and the dye extracted from the henna shrub, centralization of the transit trade of incense, herbs and spices, enriched him enormously. The Temple industry (pilgrimages, animals for sacrifices, regular donations to the Temple etc.) certainly made the Holy City an important commercial center. What is more, from 19 BC Herod most probably had permission to mint a special coin for the annual tax paid to the Temple authorities.<sup>27</sup> All that means that Herod the Great was a very wealthy monarch.

<sup>17</sup> *Ant.* XVIII, 5, 4 (131). Suggested by Roth, l. cit. and accepted with hesitation by Horst (2006), 29.

<sup>18</sup> *Ant.* XVI, 4, 5 (128). Translation quoted in Whiston (1987, 434).

<sup>19</sup> Ciecieląg (2002): 44. The same was the view of Nicolaou (1986, 435).

<sup>20</sup> It might be worth adding that the marriage was unhappy. Josephus remarks that Timios “was a man of note, but had by her [Alexandra] no children” (*Ant.* 18, 131). Tal Ilan (1995, 113) puts the question: was Alexandra barren or did she perhaps die in childbirth?

<sup>21</sup> Only noticed for example by Prause 1980, 259–260.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Schürer 1973.

<sup>23</sup> Schalit 1969.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Broshi 1992, 3–6.

<sup>25</sup> The gap in research is clearly visible in the well indexed bibliographies on Josephus, like Feldman 1984.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. among others Netzer 2006.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Broshi 1992, 5 (quoting Meshorer 1982 (2), 7–9 and Meshorer 1984, 171–179).

In his testament Herod left to Emperor Augustus “ten million [drachmae] of coined money; besides both vessels of gold and silver, and garments exceedingly costly, to Julia, Caesar’s wife, and to certain others, five million,”<sup>28</sup> a truly royal gesture. Of course, he would have wanted to secure for his successor the best relations with the emperor, to whom he owed a lot and whose obedient servant he was, a client king of a country on the periphery of the *Imperium Romanum*. On the other hand, it was visible that Herod had an instinct for good financial investments. He lent large amounts of money to the Arabs, of course requiring a high interest in return. M. Grant justly described him as businessman, speculator and entrepreneur on a huge scale. His Cypriot enterprise is, therefore, in my opinion nothing special, but it is worthy of note and deserving of close analysis.

When Herod the Great came to see Augustus in Aquileia in the second half of the year 12 BC, to ask him to solve his family and succession problems, he was prepared for every consequence. When the decisions were taken (or rather suggested by the emperor) and they pleased Herod, he was courageous enough to offer his patron a gift of enormous value, three hundred talents of gold. He knew that Augustus probably needed money badly at that time. The emperor organized games and distributed money (*congiarium*) to the Roman people. Receiving such a great gift at the right moment, Augustus decided to offer Herod something of value in return. Herod received “half the revenue of the copper mines in Cyprus.” It is interesting that care of the other half was also given to Herod. In this way the entire Cypriot metal industry was entrusted to him.<sup>29</sup> Augustus was convinced that Herod would exercise care in fulfilling his duties and would certainly be loyal, and was sure of getting his half of the interest. That would probably be more than the amount he had received from his official representative on the island previously. Herod, for his part, needed copper and silver to produce his coins,<sup>30</sup> so it was obvious that the enterprise was mutually profitable.

I do not believe, as E.M. Smallwood does, that “the management of the other half” is unjustified and illogical; Herod surely did not control the half in which he had no financial interest.” It is logical. It is not out of the question that it was Herod who suggested the idea to Augustus. The latter, knowing Herod’s ruthlessness, was doing profitable business in giving him the mines. The deal was brightened by additional official “gifts” from the emperor. Augustus honored Herod also “with other gifts and incomes.” The business was masked with appearances of close friendship.

What could be the result of the deal? In my opinion Herod obviously sent his envoys and nominated his own representative to Cyprus. And here we return to Alexandra and Timios. Princess Alexandra was certainly accompanied by some, if not many, Jews of her own court. She represented her father, the friend of the emperor, and the members of her entourage could have been used in supervising separate mines. We cannot discount the possibility that within a few years a whole Jewish colony arose around the mines, even if it had not existed before the events described. It would be strange if the Jews (who were in “flourishing condition” in Cyprus according to

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 17, 190 (Whiston’s (1987, 464) translation).

<sup>29</sup> It should not be forgotten that Herod controlled trade routes to the east, and according to Grant (2000, 193) the metal was exported as far as to India.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Skowronek 1994, 39–45.

Josephus) had not been involved in the most prosperous industry of the island, which was copper mining.

The next chronological mention of Jews in Cyprus is found in *Legatio ad Gaium* 282 of Philo of Alexandria. In this verse, quoted from a letter of King Agrippa II to Emperor Caligula, Philo mentions many countries where Jews had established “colonies.” Then he adds, “And not only are the continents full of Jewish colonies, but also all the most celebrated islands are so, too, such as Euboea, and Cyprus, and Crete.”<sup>31</sup> We have here a clear confirmation that at the end of the fourth decade AD Cyprus had numerous citizens of Jewish origin.

Turning to what is chronologically the next source, the Acts of the Apostles, we find there mentions of numerous Jewish synagogues. We know for example that in Salamis there were at least a few synagogai, as Luke says that Paul and Barnabas, assisted by John, “landed at Salamis and proclaimed the world of God in the synagogues [plural!]<sup>32</sup> of the Jews” (13, 5). It is very distressing that after so many years of regular excavations in the ruins of the ancient Salamis archaeologists have not yet discovered even one synagogue.<sup>33</sup> Of course we know that the city was destroyed by the Jewish rebellion in 116 AD, when Trajan was ruling the Roman Empire, but the total absence of Jewish remains from the city can only be put down to very bad luck on the part of the searchers. The only material proof of the presence of a synagogue in Salamis comes not from the first century, but from a much later period. As Mitford says, “the repair or embellishment of a synagogue in Salamis is attested for the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>34</sup>

As we know from the Acts of Apostles, the missionaries “traveled the whole length of the island,” which might be interpreted as meaning that they preached in other synagogues as well. The existence of a synagogue at Amathus, for example, has already been mentioned.<sup>35</sup> We can suppose that practically in each of the eighteen known cities there were some Jewish colonies and synagogues.<sup>36</sup> And very probably nearly all of them, at least those in cities near the main roads,<sup>37</sup> would have been visited by the apostles. Unfortunately we do not know the results of the apostles’ work. There is not a hint about that in the text of Luke, except that the proconsul (gr. *anthypatos*) believed, but in fact the mission from Jerusalem was directed not to the gentiles but to the Cypriot fellow-countrymen of Barnabas. The exegetes agree that Paul’s theological principle was to proclaim the Gospel “to the Jew first but also to the Greek” (Rom I, 16). Preaching in the synagogues was “a regular practice” for Paul.<sup>38</sup> It seems that Paul “continued to use the synagogue even after he had become offensive to it.”<sup>39</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Philo, *On the Embassy to Gaius* 282 (translated by Yonge 1993, 783).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Wintherington 1997, 395. He is convinced that the synagogue “was a place, not just a gathering of people” (note 140 referring to p. 255 ff. of his book).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Karageorghis 1969, 200–202; Finley 1977, 187–188 (Salamis); Yon 1980.

<sup>34</sup> Mitford 1950, 110, no. 3.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. note 8 above.

<sup>36</sup> Concerning the main Cypriot cities of the Early Roman period: Mitford 1980, 1308–1332.

<sup>37</sup> Cypriot highways in antiquity were described recently by Bekker-Nielsen (2004). Cf. also Bekker-Nielsen 2001, 247–254 and Gill 1995, 219–228.

<sup>38</sup> Barrett 2004, 611. Cf. Acts 13, 14; 14, 1; 17, 1; 18, 4 and 19; 19, 8.

<sup>39</sup> Barrett 2004, 611. Cf. 2 Cor 11, 24.



We know from the Acts that Barnabas came to Jerusalem from a Jewish colony in Cyprus (Acts 4, 36). It seems highly possible that he owned some agricultural area on the island,<sup>40</sup> as he sold it and offered the proceeds to the Apostles (Acts 4, 37). B. Winterington even suggests that, when coming to Salamis with Paul and Mark, Barnabas “still had close contacts, perhaps family as well, in the Jewish community there.”<sup>41</sup> But it seems that even that connection did not help the apostles. The Jews remained reluctant.<sup>42</sup>

St. Paul left Cyprus and moved his mission in the direction of Perge, the Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, then to Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia. After leaving Cyprus by sea, the ways of the three apostles separated. John Mark was the first to leave, immediately after landing at Perge in Pamphylia (Acts 13, 13). We can only speculate on the reason for his departure: family problems or the family’s request. Perhaps it was a need to report to the heads of the Jerusalem Church on the results of the mission, or simply disappointment in his role during the visit to the island. It seems that Paul’s opinion of John Mark was not as good (Acts 15, 38) as that of Barnabas, who was a close relative of John Mark’s (Col. 4, 10). At the end, after the return from the mission in Pamphylia and Pisidia and the council of Jerusalem Barnabas too separated from Paul, because Paul did not want to see John Mark again in their mission. After a “violent quarrel” Paul continued his mission in Asia Minor with Silas (Acts 15, 40) only. It is interesting that Paul never returned to Cyprus and never even mentioned that area in his letters. That could mean only one thing. The undertaking directed to the Jewish colonists on the island really failed to produce the results Paul expected. If they had been significant that would have been noted by Luke. But it was not. This state of affairs can be supported by the wish expressed by Barnabas to go back to Cyprus after the Jerusalem council and “visit all the towns where we preached the word of Lord, so that we can see how the brothers are doing” (Acts 15, 36–37).

Barnabas and John Mark’s second mission to Cyprus was unfortunately not described in the Acts. We are only informed that “Barnabas sailed off [from Antioch] with Mark to Cyprus” (Acts 15, 39). More data are supplied in the “Acta et Passio

<sup>40</sup> However, from the quoted text it is not clear if Barnabas owned some piece of land in Palestine or in Cyprus. It is also not clear if he left his own family on the island. I would prefer to suggest that he was not married and left some relatives there only. It would have been rather immoral to him to sell his land and leave his wife and children without any support. Of course it was possible to divorce, but that was not allowed by the teaching of Jesus, so we can probably count it out. But it is evident that he was bound to Cyprus, as he went back to the island again and was eventually killed by his fellow-countrymen. The tradition about his martyrdom is confirmed by the *Acts of Barnabas*. Costas P. Kyrris (1974, 97–125) has traced his story and cult in the Cypriot tradition since the paleochristian period.

<sup>41</sup> Winterington 1997, 395.

<sup>42</sup> Despite the claim in Acts 11, 19 that before Paul “Cyprus had already been reached by Christian missionaries, and the journey of Saul and Barnabas could be regarded as in the first instance a revisiting of converts already made and churches already established; no mention however is made of such converts and churches, and for this reason the notice in 11, 19 is often discounted”: Barrett 2004, 610–611. I fully agree with this obvious interpretation of the texts. If we accept that [Q.] Sergius Paulus was *anthypatos* of Cyprus in 37 at the latest, as I do, it is evident that rules out the existence of already established groups or churches on the island (however small they were). Concerning the dating of the *anthypatos*, cf. Kapera 2009, 18 and 2010, in press. In fact the text of Acts 11, 19 states only that some paleochristians ‘scattered’ after the death of St. Stephen and reached Cyprus spreading the news, speaking a lot (*lalantes ton logon*) to the Jews only, not necessarily converting them.

Barnabae in Cypro,” but this document is relatively late and probably reflects some tradition about the conversion of the island.<sup>43</sup> Costas P. Kyrris, an expert on the Byzantine period, is convinced that we should not underestimate or reject such apocryphal texts. Even local Cypriot “Synaxaria” “come from a venerable local church tradition which condenses or crystallizes events unknown to the non-Cypriot authors.”<sup>44</sup> According to his research Barnabas “preached ... for a number of years.”<sup>45</sup> The Apostle is venerated in Salamis on Cyprus as a martyr and founder of the church on the island.

The “Acts of St. Barnabas” come from the period 431 and 488, as established by M. Starowieyski,<sup>46</sup> and the “Panegyric” is even later, dating to the middle of the sixth century (certainly before 648, when Salamis was looted by the Arabs).<sup>47</sup> More valuable are the Acts, which include some Cypriot traditions concerning bishops living from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries and show good knowledge of the topography of the island. A characteristic element of this work is the negative attitude to the Jews (enemy number one is the magos Bar-Jesus). On the other hand, we do not find traces of enmity to the pagans. Starowieyski recognizes in this a repercussion of the “important role of the Jewish community in Cyprus before the year 116 and a pogrom of inhabitants of the island organized by the Jews in that year.”<sup>48</sup> The topographical data of the Acts are valuable for the historian interested in the history of Cypriot Jews. They indirectly identify for us the areas where the Jews were living<sup>49</sup>, not necessarily in the fifth century, as the traditions could be of much earlier origin.

One more Cypriot Jew, named Mnason, is mentioned in the Acts 21, 16. He was one of the first disciples of the period of St. Stephen’s martyrdom. His name “may have been a hellenization of the Hebrew ‘menasseh’ (Manasseh), but it was an authentic Greek name.”<sup>50</sup> He is called a Hellenist by many exegetes, but the term “archaios” may simply mean “of long standing” as a member of the church. He hosted Paul and his companions in Jerusalem after their return from the third missionary trip; some say halfway between Caesarea and Jerusalem, but that is not evident from the text; presumably it was rather Jerusalem.<sup>51</sup> This event took place in 58 AD.<sup>52</sup> Both the story of Barnabas and that of Mnason are interesting examples showing that the rich<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Starowieyski 1991, 391–413; 1994, 193–198.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Kyrris 1974, 102–103.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Kyrris 1974, 125. It is regrettable that the author did not continue his paper on Barnabas and Paul, ending with their first mission.

<sup>46</sup> Starowieyski 1993, 323.

<sup>47</sup> Starowieyski 1991, 401.

<sup>48</sup> Starowieyski 1991, 399.

<sup>49</sup> The following cities are mentioned in the Acts: Anemurium, Kromnion (to-day Kormachitis), Lapitos, Lampadistos, Tamassos, Kition, Old Paphos, Kourion, Amathusa (sic!), Salamis, Ledra, and Limnes. Cf. Starowieyski 1991, 407–410 (passim).

<sup>50</sup> Bruce 1990, 443. However, Dąbrowski (1961, 418–419) preferred the identification of the name Mason with the Greek Jason or latinized Nason.

<sup>51</sup> Bruce 1990, 443.

<sup>52</sup> His date is traditionally accepted by the exegetes.

<sup>53</sup> Such is the opinion of Jeremias (1969, 105) concerning Barnabas.

Jewish Cypriots often travelled to Judaea and Jerusalem because of their religion, relatives and trade. Wine and copper first of all were imported to Jerusalem.<sup>54</sup>

When looking at the indexes of Josephus Flavius' writings, it is surprising that we find so few data about Jews from Cyprus. In fact the *Jewish Antiquities* contains only one name of a Cypriote, Atomos (Simon) from the early 50s of the first century AD. It is intriguing that in his case again (like in Acts 13, 7–12) we are faced with a magus coming from the island. Again he is a Jew, similarly to the case of the already mentioned Bar-Jesus of the court of Sergius Paulus, probably performing the role of adviser and astrologer, this time at the court of Felix, the procurator of Judaea in the years 52–58/59 AD).<sup>55</sup> Atomos' name remains a mystery. The Greek version established by B. Niese has the name Atomos; however, some manuscripts have the Latin translation Simon, a typical Jewish name; the latter name also appears in some marginal notes in the *Antiquities*.<sup>56</sup>

Atomos was used as an envoy of governor Antonius Felix to Drusilla, the sister of Agrippa II. At that time, about 53 AD, Drusilla, who was born in 38/39 AD,<sup>57</sup> was a young girl of about fourteen. Just a year or two before, her brother Agrippa II had given her in marriage to Azizus, king of Emesa, "upon his consent to be circumcised," contrary to the first candidate Epiphanes, son of King Antiochus (*Ant.* XX, VII, 139). The marriage was dissolved very soon. The anecdote is so amusing that is worth quoting this passage of Josephus in full:

While Felix was procurator of Judea, he saw this Drusilla, and fell in love with her; for she did indeed exceed all other women in beauty, and he sent to her a person whose name was Simon, one of his friends; a Jew he was, and by birth a Cypriot, and one who pretended to be a magician; and endeavored to persuade her to forsake her present husband, and marry him; and promised that if she would not refuse him, he would make her a happy woman. Accordingly she acted ill, and because she was desirous to avoid her sister Berenice's envy, for she was very ill treated by her on account of her beauty, was prevailed upon to transgress the laws of her forefathers, and to marry Felix; and when he had had a son by her, he named him Agrippa. But after what manner that young man, with his wife, perished at the conflagration of the mountain Vesuvius, in the days of Titus Caesar, shall be related hereafter.<sup>58</sup>

It is very characteristic that the Roman governor kept close to him a magus from Cyprus. There are some serious suppositions that there existed a special school of magoi in Old Paphos. Atomos would have been one of its members. Felix used the magus, probably expecting that he had some special magic talent which would help him to convince Drusilla to leave her husband and come to him. What is more, being an educated Jew who knew not only Jewish law but probably also Roman law,

<sup>54</sup> Josephus (*Ant.* 20, 51) also informs of the import of dried figs by Queen Helene of Adiabene during a famine in Palestine.

<sup>55</sup> Concerning Felix and his relationship with the Jews, cf. Schürer 1973, 459–466; Dąbrowski 1965, 235–237; Bosak 1996, 132–134; Ciecielag 2000, 137–141; 2002, 163–164; Rapske 2000, 982–983; Vermes 2006, 78–79 (s.v. Feliks); Chronological problems of Felix's rule in Judea, cf. Rakocy 2003, 290–301.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Schalit 1968, 113 (s.v. 24 Simon). It is regrettable that in the last 50 years the idea of Franz Blatt (1958) to publish a full Latin version of Josephus has not been continued. A close look at the 171 Latin manuscripts probably would explain why we have such a difference between the Greek name ('Atomos) and the Hebrew one (Simon).

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Ciecielag 2002, 140.

<sup>58</sup> *Ant.* 20, 142–144. Whiston's translation (1987, 533–534).

‘Atomos was able to persuade Drusilla to send her husband a letter of divorce, which was prohibited by Mosaic law<sup>59</sup> at that time but was allowed by Roman law.<sup>60</sup> As we know, ‘Atomos’ mission succeeded. It is not clear from Josephus when ‘Atomos became a “friend” of procurator Felix. Had he been one already before his mission to Drusilla, or did he acquire that title after the event? It is worth recalling that some years later Drusilla met Paul the apostle. She was very much interested in what exactly Paul was preaching to the Jews in Jerusalem and wanted to listen to him in person when he became a prisoner in Caesarea. E. Mary Smallwood explains that action of Drusilla’s, saying that her “knowledge of Jewish thought and customs” might have been helpful to Felix in “permit[ting] him to avoid treading of Jewish corns.”<sup>61</sup> However, Drusilla’s first unofficial meeting with Paul was not very profitable for her, as Paul spoke about “righteousness, self-control and the coming Judgment” (Acts 24, 25), which immediately froze discussion. Felix realized at once that Paul had touched on a very delicate problem which also concerned the legality of his marriage, and, being afraid of discussing that, decided to return the apostle to his cell.<sup>62</sup> It is perhaps worth adding that two years later Felix’ successor, procurator Porcius Festus, also interrogated Paul in Caesarea in the presence of Jewish notables, King Agrippa II and Berenice, Drusilla’s sister (Acts 25,13–26,32).

To sum up, these mentions of the activities of the Cypriots, ‘Atomos and Bar-Jesus, might suggest that in the times of the Julio-Claudian dynasty some Jews of the island were relatively rich, well-educated and allowed into the local governmental courts. Some of them turned out to be very useful, since, like ‘Atomos, they were called friends of provincial governors.

It is surprising that in the texts of Josephus we do not find even one mention of a Cypriot in connection with the first Jewish rebellion against the Romans (66–70 AD). Did the Cypriot Jews stay out of trouble? It looks rather unlikely to me. News of the rebellion and anti-Roman ideas must have spread rapidly, and furthermore, coins of the first year of the rebellion are known from Cyprus. Such silver coins are known from the excavations at Curium.<sup>63</sup> J.J. Price explains their presence through commerce still going on at the beginning of the revolt or by travels of Roman soldiers. In any case, he reminds us, the coins, even if they were officially not used after 70 AD and their symbols and legends were incomprehensible, remained valuable because of their silver.<sup>64</sup>

As is known from ancient sources, the Cypriot Jews were obliged to supply wine for the Jerusalem Temple.<sup>65</sup> The find might mean only that Jerusalem and Cyprus were

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. discussion in Hoehner (1980, 139, note 1). According to Ilan (1995, 146, and especially note 31) the debate “over whether women in Judaea of the Second Temple period, even if not in Pharisaic circles, were legally permitted to divorce their husbands” still continues. The debate started when Milik (1957, 21) announced in 1956 the existence of a “get” from Nahal Hever.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Deut, 24,1; the Mishnah, Gittin VI, 1–IX, 10 (detailed rules concerning divorce) and the Roman *Codex Iustinianum* (V, 17, 5–6; VIII, 38, 2).

<sup>61</sup> Smallwood 1981, 270.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Dąbrowski 1953, 457.

<sup>63</sup> Cox 1959, no. 200 (quoted in Price, see below).

<sup>64</sup> Price 1992, 242.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. note 4.

still in close touch (at least at the beginning of the rebellion). However, J.J. Price is right in the final statement that the number of coins is limited, so they cannot “support definite conclusions.”<sup>66</sup>

Early in 69 AD, Titus, son of the future emperor Vespasian, visited Cyprus and the famous temple of Aphrodite at Paphos.<sup>67</sup> We can only speculate on whether this visit with a strong military escort impressed the Jewish inhabitants of Cyprus so much that no members of the Sicarii decided to shelter rebels or instigate a rebellion against the Romans after the fall of Jerusalem. They scattered in Cyrenaica and Egypt first of all, and we do not find a hint about their activity in Cyprus. That is significant, as Josephus devoted a special final chapter of his Jewish War to the years 70–73 AD and such activity would certainly have been recorded. However, two generations later, at the beginning of the second century AD, the rich and flourishing Jewish colonies in Cyprus were smashed to pieces by the regular Roman army. Without any known reason, the peaceful and quiet Jewish citizens rose<sup>68</sup> against the Roman authority and the Greeks, their fellow citizens in 116 AD, with fatal consequences for the island.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Price 1992, 242.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Tac. *Hist.* II, 2–4; Suet. *Titus* 5.

<sup>68</sup> Dio Cassius, LXVIII, 32, 3.

<sup>69</sup> H. Hauben, Herod the Great and the Copper Mines of Cyprus, *Ancient Society* 35 (2005): 175–195; A. Destrooper-Georgiades, Jewish Coins in Cyprus, *Israel Numismatic Research* 1 (2006): 37–49.

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Jerzy Mazur

## JEWISH SEALS IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN POLAND

Sphragistics (also known as sigillography) is one of history's auxiliary sciences and investigates the historical meaning of seals and signet rings attached to or impressed upon documents. It is generally accepted by historians that seals constitute an important primary source for an investigation of the legal, social and economic position of the Jews. This article attempts to undertake the problem of the use of seals by the Jews in medieval and early modern Poland-Lithuania. It will analyze how Jews employed seals as an important legal instrument in notarizing their contracts, deeds, wills and other documents.

The present text is a response to elaboration on some of the theses expressed in the scholarly works of two eminent historians occupied with medieval European history and who were particularly interested in both Jewish and Christian sigillography. Adam Chmiel (1865–1934), who was a professor at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, published in the years 1899–1903 a series of articles devoted to the history of Jewish seals in *Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archeologiczne (Numismatic and Archeological Reports)*.<sup>1</sup> There, he presented his newly discovered Jewish seals and signet rings. Chmiel estimated that all of the artifacts enlisted in his articles were produced and used in early modern Poland (between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries).

As the oldest example of the use of seal by a Jew, Chmiel described a signet ring owned by Bohadamer Raszczicz, the “son of the Jew from Ostra.” Bohadamer's seal was mentioned in a document issued by him in Kraków in 1524. The seal itself was not preserved, but Chmiel testified to the existence of the ribbon to which the seal was originally attached. Raszczicz's document was a confirmation of the loan of 133 Polish *złoty* given to Just Dłacz, a deputy to the Kraków's city council.<sup>2</sup>

Adam Chmiel's articles were primarily concentrated on the Jewish sigillography and, as such, are unique in Polish historical literature. He subsequently established that the seal of Bohadamer Raszczicz from 1524 was the earliest example of a Jewish seal used for notarizing a civil action. Thus, one could conclude that Polish Jews did not possess or use personal seals before the middle of the sixteenth century.

Daniel M. Friedenberg, a well-known scholar of the auxiliary sciences of Jewish history, accepted such a conclusion. In 1987, he published a monumental monograph devoted to the medieval Jewish sigillography (sphragistics) in Europe and the Ottoman Empire. Friedenberg discovered, in cooperation with a number of American, European and Israeli medievalists and archivists, an impressive collection of Jewish seals. This large treasury of primary sources – both iconographic and documentary – enabled him

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<sup>1</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 61–70, 113–116, 390–392; Chmiel 1903, 160–164.

<sup>2</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 392.



to analyze systematically the phenomenon of Jewish seals in medieval Ashkenazi and Sephardi practice. Friedenbergs book takes the form of an extended catalogue containing 177 entries from France, England, Spain, Italy and the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation. The author attached, when possible, the photographs of documents and seals, which he identified as Jewish.

Friedenberg also investigated the use of Jewish seals in Central and Eastern Europe. While presenting a few examples of the Jewish seals from Central Europe, primarily from the territories of Hungary and Czech Crown, Friedenbergs underlined that any definite conclusions regarding Central European Jewish history were questionable because of largely insufficient archival research and underdeveloped local Jewish studies.

In one of the annexes from his book, Friedenbergs discusses the scholarship and theories of Adam Chmiel. Friedenbergs questioned Chmiels identification of Bohadamer's Raszczyk seal as an example of the Jewish seal. The American historian paid attention to the very important detail included in the text of the document from 1524.<sup>3</sup> He noticed that in the aforementioned court record, Bohadamer was literally described by a municipal scribe as the "son of the Jew from Ostra" (*son der Jude von der Ostra*). According to Friedenbergs, this formulation puts in question the Jewishness of Bohadamer. In the late medieval and early modern Europe, Jews usually appeared in official sources with the Latin or German prefix: *Iudeus* or *der Jude*. According to Friedenbergs, Bohadamer's depiction as the "son of the Jew" should be understood as a suggestion that he was most likely a Jewish convert to Christianity. Furthermore, this hypothesis was strengthened by Raszczyks first name – Bohadamer – which etymology suggests rather German – Christian roots.

Friedenberg's conclusion that Bohadamer Raszczyk was not Jewish at the time of using his seal is very important for the main subject of this text – the earliest history of Jewish seals in Poland. Is Friedenbergs assumption indeed correct? I will try to show that his explanation is only one of the few possible solutions and arguably not the most probable one. Friedenbergs thesis on the Bohadamer's Raszczyk conversion is quite disputable from the perspective of our knowledge of medieval legal forms. The description of Bohadamer as the "son of the Jew from Ostra" should not be understood as an obvious and a conclusive proof for his conversion to Christianity. When a medieval Jew converted into Christianity he was given another, very standardized cognomen by judicial authorities: *Iudeus conversus*, *Iudeus baptisatus* in Latin, *przechrzta* in Polish or *getafte Iude* in German. Nevertheless, the question remains: who was Bohadamer Raszczyk? I would argue, contrary to Friedenbergs, that Bohadamer Raszczyk was Jewish. The letter of deeds from 1524 was written in Kraków, and the most important information for a local municipal scribe was Bohadamer's provenance. Most likely this document was prepared according to the information orally provided by Bohadamer himself. It is very plausible to assume that Bohadamer speaking, either Yiddish or in the vernacular used a traditional Jewish formula: Bohadamer, son of the Jew (name of his father) from Ostra. He provided his name, the name of his father and place of birth (or permanent residency). Such an oral

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<sup>3</sup> Friedenbergs 1987, 364–365.

declaration was most likely written down by the Kraków's notary. We have sufficiently numerous examples of Jews who appeared in late medieval and early modern legal documents without being clearly identified as Jews.

Regardless of the questionable conclusions of the Friedenberg – Chmiel's 'polemics' concerning Raszczicz – American historians argued that Jews in Poland-Lithuania did not use or even possess personal seals at least until the middle of the sixteenth century. The second part of this text will clearly show that these assumptions, perhaps expressed due to insufficient access to primary sources, were incorrect.

Possessing a personal seal by individuals clearly indicated their ability to carry out all legal actions, particularly those related to financial operations. Attaching seals to documents was one of the most important ways of certifying their authenticity, especially if a person performing such legal action was unable to sign it or if the signature was not sufficient. Therefore, seals, together with oath, witnesses, and later on signature, should be enlisted among the most popular means of validating documents. The use of seals by Jews was considered to be a considerable privilege in Europe during the Middle Ages, strengthening their parity with Christian burghers. This is clearly visible in the 1223 ordinances of King Luis VIII limiting the banking activity of French Jews. One of the punitive articles, aimed at hindering Jewish money-lending, was the prohibition of using seals for loan-debts.<sup>4</sup> Several decades earlier Phillip Augustus also appointed two supervisors of the Jewish seal in every large city of his kingdom.<sup>5</sup>

Before I attempt to sketch the history of Jewish seals in medieval Poland I should make the point that the Jews there were not subject to any significant limitations regarding their legal abilities to conclude valid contracts. After the eleventh century, numerous information about Jewish activities in trade and in royal and princely service can be found in Polish and Hebrew sources. It is also well known that the privilege of Boleslaus the Pious, the prince of Kalisz, issued in 1264 (and later confirmed by Kazimierz the Great) granted a wide-ranging protection to the Jews and their economic activities. They were permitted to transport merchandise, trade and lend money on interest. Thus, there is no historical justification for a possible thesis that the Jews in Poland were not able to use their personal seal because of the legal limitations imposed on them by the Polish authorities.

Seals are also discussed, although not very frequently, in Jewish legal texts. Jewish seals were used extensively in ancient Israel; however also in the early Middle Ages the exilarchs in Arab Babylonia had their own seals.<sup>6</sup> Clearly, Jewish religious authorities were suspicious of using the seals primarily because of the fear that the images engraved on them violated both biblical and Talmudic law. Such doubts were expressed (for example, by the German scholar Meir of Rothenburg (1215–1293)).<sup>7</sup> Despite those legal controversies, Jews employed seals both in validating legal deeds and especially in protecting the laws of *kashrut*. This aspect of the seals' use was

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<sup>4</sup> Golb 1998, 418.

<sup>5</sup> Baron 1967, 329.

<sup>6</sup> Baron 1958, 132. Baron quotes a *responsum* of Natronai (in 787): 'They dispatched to all Jewish communities letters provided with the seal of the exilarch and the four seals of the authorities.'

<sup>7</sup> 'We are suspicious of idolatry only with projecting a relief seal...;' quoted after Mann 2005, 222.

discussed in detail in the Babylonian Talmud.<sup>8</sup> In 1627, the Lithuanian *Va'ad* instructed the Jewish producers of dairy products to seal the doors of the chamber if the products were stored bearing their personal seal.<sup>9</sup> Seals also had a much deeper, religious and even mystical meaning in Judaism. With the symbol of a seal, the thirteenth-century *Zohar* identified the divine affirmation of God's covenant with Israel. At the same time, the author of the *Zohar* displayed a remarkable knowledge of the legal importance of seals in medieval world. It described how seals were affixed to the document and mentioned several aspects of their legal importance.<sup>10</sup>

The earliest evidence of the use of personal seals by Polish Jews can be traced back to the document issued in 1381 by Lewko, a Jew from Kraków. Lewko was one of the most prominent Jewish bankers and financiers in medieval Kraków, and indeed in the entire Kingdom of Poland. He lived in the second part of fourteenth century and provided financial services to the municipal authorities, local noblemen, burghers, and even state dignitaries of the capital city of Kraków. Above all, Lewko was well known for his close association with the royal court of the Polish kings Kazimierz the Great (1333–1370) and Władysław Jagiełło (1385–1434), whom he assisted in their public and personal expenses. Lewko of Kraków was also an important leader of the Jewish community in Kraków, which at this time was located between St. Anne and St. Szczepan Streets.

In the document from 1381, Lewko confirmed his absolution of Kraków's city council from all debts it owed to him. This agreement was concluded between him and the municipality of Kraków represented by the city counselors: Martinus Warschow, Martinus Bem, Albert Fochsnagil, Wynand Danchk, Andrew Wierzynek, Jan Gerlach, Jan Spitzmer and Stephen of Olawa.<sup>11</sup> The text of the agreement included a solemn declaration by Lewko that:

*... famosi viri..., consules civitatis Cracouiensis, nomine suo et totius universitatis dicte civitatis, mihi ad plenum de universis et singulis mutuacionibus pecuniariis, quas eisdem umquam feci in quibuscunque summis magnis vel parvis quocunque tempore, hora vel momento et mutuavi sub quocunque pacto, condicionibus seu promissionibus quibuscunque, usuram vel non usuram concernentibus quomodolibet a primevo tempore, quo cum eisdem consulibus et eorundem quibuscunque predessoribus nomine, quo supra umquam, ut predicitur, in mutuacionibus pecuniaris agere, facere et disponere habui usque ad diem datarum presencium, integraliter et ex toto satisfecerunt pleniter persolvendo.*<sup>12</sup>

The document ends with an important statement for our subject, a corroborative formula: *In cuius rei testimonium sigillum meum presentibus est appensum*. It proves unquestionably that Lewko authenticated his document not by placing his signature but primarily by appending his personal seal.<sup>13</sup> This agreement between Lewko of Kraków,

<sup>8</sup> See for example a lengthy discussion between R. Eleazar and R. Johanan on protecting the *kashrut* of wine in: Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin, Avodah Zarah 31a.

<sup>9</sup> Halperin 1945, no. 46.

<sup>10</sup> Frojmovic 2002, 77–78.

<sup>11</sup> Wyrozumska 1995, no. 89, 40.

<sup>12</sup> Wyrozumska 1995, no. 89, 39.

<sup>13</sup> Wyrozumska 1995, no. 89, 39.

the Jewish potentate and communal leader, and the city council was again confirmed on the following day, August 4, 1381. Thus, the year 1381 needs to be accepted as the first known example of the use of the Jewish seal in the Polish Kingdom.<sup>14</sup>

Another interesting instance of the Jewish seal used for commercial purposes occurred in Kraków at the end of fifteenth century. Ryfko, a Jew from Kiev (*Ryvko Iudeus de Kyov*), carried his business affairs in the capital city of the kingdom. Ryfko, according to “the law of the guest” (*ius hospitum*), tried to call back the loan that his father gave to Kraków’s citizen Nicolas Tchenskindorf. To prove his legal claims Ryfko presented a document of deeds issued by his father and authenticated by his personal seal (*sub eius sigillo*).<sup>15</sup>

However, not only Jews who lived or conducted their business in the capital city of Kraków used their seals for legal purposes. More examples of Jewish seals can be found outside of Kraków. We can see an importance of seals for financial transactions among the Jews coming from the major communities in Lwów (Leopolis, Lemberg, Lwów) and Brześć Litewski (Brest Litovsk).

One of the more influential Jewish merchants and money lenders that used a personal signet ring was Schanko from Brześć Litewski. He was very active in Warsaw between the years of 1429 and 1443. His main occupations were trade and lending small sums of money at interest. In 1429, Schanko sold a very large supply of cloth to Stanisław Rospeński from Gabin. He also sold precious spices imported from the East and other raw materials such as timber.<sup>16</sup> After 1441, Schanko endured serious financial difficulties, most likely because of his failure to meet the requirements of the contract, which he concluded a few years earlier with two merchants from Gdańsk (Danzig), Nicolas Wilkendorff and Froyn. They sued Schanko at the Warsaw municipal court and demanded the confiscation of his movable property. Schanko appeared in the court and tried to prevent the abovementioned confiscation by issuing a written promise to satisfy the plaintiffs’ claims. This document was authenticated by Schanko’s personal signet seal in April of 1442 (*zo habe ich Schanko meyn zignet mit willen unde wesende beynden an dyse brieffen gedruket*).<sup>17</sup>

One of the most unusual and interesting court cases over the Jewish use of seals can be found in *Akta Grodzkie i Ziemskie (Records of Castle and Regional Courts)*.<sup>18</sup> This dealt with an internal conflict in the Lwów Jewish community that arose in the middle of fifteenth century between two important and influential members of Ruthenian (Ukrainian) Jewry: Schachno of Lwów, who leased lucrative royal customs in the city of Lwów and major merchant Kalef from the Genoese, Italian colony of Caffa (on the Black Sea coast). A quarrel started when a lawsuit was filed by Kalef of Caffa against Schachno, in which Kalef declared that Schachno owed him a large sum of 56 scores of Prague *grosch*. As proof of his allegations, Kalef presented the court with two letters written by the *wojewoda* (Red Ruthenia province sheriff) and Schachno himself. Kalef

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<sup>14</sup> Wyrozumska 1995, no. 88, 40: *In cuius rei testimonium sigillum dicte civitatis nostre Cracouiensis presentibus est appensum.*

<sup>15</sup> Wyrozumska 1995, no. 766, 168.

<sup>16</sup> Wierzbowski 1916, no. 99, 586, 588, 951.

<sup>17</sup> Wierzbowski 1916, no. 619.

<sup>18</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV.

also stressed that Schachno had attached his own seal to the aforementioned letter. Schachno disagreed and claimed that he possessed another document with Kalef's seal. The latter proved that it was *the wojewoda* who agreed to pay Schachno's debts. Kalef refuted this argument on the grounds of forgery. He claimed that the seal presented by Schachno was not his own, Kalef's seal (*sed predictus Calef abnegavit se a predicta litera et asseruit, quod non sit suum sigillum*).<sup>19</sup> Kalef's accusations of the forgery created confusion among the municipal judges. They did not feel competent to investigate this allegation and finally decided that Kalef should (...) *testes produceret, qui profiterentur et iurarent, quod sit ipsius sigillum secundum ius et modum Iudeorum, cui precepimus, ut Iudeos testes nominaret, qui eosdem nominavit, sed actor noluit aliquem Iudeum in testimonium recipere...*<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, we do not know anything about the results of this fascinating legal dispute. Nevertheless, it is striking that the Jewish representatives were called to provide their expertise to the Christian municipal court regarding the authenticity of the Jewish seal. This suggests that the seal had a Hebrew inscription and *therefore* Christian judges required Jewish expertise.

Schachno of Lwów experienced further serious financial problems. We learn about these from another lawsuit brought by Jan Ciolek from Wnyków to the court in Lwów in June 1443. This petty nobleman tried to recover his loan on the basis of a deeds letter that was allegedly issued by Schachno. Schachno, when ordered by the judge to certify its validity, denied the authenticity of this document, (*quod si... Schachno iudeus recognoverit alias zeszna ad sigillum littere sue obligatorie*).<sup>21</sup> He questioned both the validity of the seal and signatures on the document provided by Jan Ciolek (... *Super quo debito literam obligacionis Schachnonis produxit sub sigillo eius. Schachno derogavit littere et inscriptionis*).<sup>22</sup>

A similar situation occurred two years later (June 1445), when Schachno attempted to denounce the authenticity of a deeds letter presented to the Lwów's castle court by Pietro Messopero. Pietro was an Italian merchant from Licostomo, Genoese Italian colony located on the Black Sea coast. According to the Messopero's testimony Schachno failed to pay back a substantial debt of 157 florins (*grzywna*). During the first court hearing Schachno demanded from Pietro to present an original deeds letter validated by his, Schachno's seal (*habes super me litteram sub meo sigillo obligatoriam?*). Pietro, represented by his attorney (*procurator*) Jan of Wysokie, confirmed that he had an original deeds letter issued by Schachno (*habeo literam obligatoriam super te*). In response, Schachno questioned the authenticity of the document (*przyganil literam obligatoriam*) and petitioned the judge to refer his case to the Jewish court (*domini, peto, iudicate me secundum ius Iudeorum*).<sup>23</sup> It is very possible that Schachno questioned the validity of Pietro's letter of deeds again by claiming the forgery of seals. This would eventually allow him to be referred to the Jewish court in the Lwów castle (*sąd wojewodziński*).

<sup>19</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV, no. 140.

<sup>20</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV, no. 160.

<sup>21</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV, no. 784.

<sup>22</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV, no. 785.

<sup>23</sup> AGZ, vol. XIV, no. 1406.

Unfortunately, we do not have any Jewish seals from late medieval Poland preserved today. Perhaps it would be justified to conclude that because of the lack of sufficient archival material we cannot say anything definite about the iconography and inscriptions of these seals. Nevertheless, it is still possible that a careful archival investigation could bring new discoveries. Despite these insufficiencies, it seems reasonable to analyze a typical iconography of Jewish seals used in other parts of Central and Western Europe. Such a comparative approach may suggest possible answers to the question of iconography of the Jewish seals in medieval Poland–Lithuania. For this purpose, I will use an already mentioned, monumental catalogue of the Jewish medieval seals published by Daniel M. Friedenberg. Additionally, I will limit my analysis to the Jewish seals from those Ashkenazi lands that shared borders with the Polish Kingdom in the Middle Ages.

The Hebrew Bible, especially the Pentateuch, directly inspired the most popular graphic motifs employed by Jewish art in medieval Europe, particularly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. “National” self-consciousness was primarily expressed in the frequent references to the twelve tribes of Israel. Certain motifs intended to symbolize the specific tribes of Israel and significant names of the heroes preserved by Jewish tradition. Thus, the tribe of Judah was represented by the whelp of a lion and the tribes of Zebulun and Naphthali respectively by wool and the doe. The donkey or tent symbolized the tribe of Issachar, while the snake and eagle were seen as representations of the tribe of Dan. Joseph’s tribe was portrayed by wine or the bull. The wolf was connected to the tribe of Benjamin; a picture of pastoral staff symbolized Levi, the lion the tribe of Gad and finally Ephraim was linked to fish.<sup>24</sup> Some of these symbols (eagles, oxen, lions, cherubim) were strongly connected to the scriptural description of the Second Temple. They were also present in the symbolism of Christian seals but obviously had a distinctively different meaning and purpose.

Parallel to the influence of the Jewish symbols on Christian iconography, Christian motifs found their way into Jewish art. Among such symbols adopted by the Jewish artists were those prominent in a newly developed cult of Mary in Europe, especially in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In this time some Jewish seals were adorned with the symbols of Mary’s cult such as triple lilies and roses; however, these signs were obviously stripped of their original meaning and served only as a decorative element.<sup>25</sup>

There were also numerous graphic representations unambiguously pointing to the Jewishness of the seals’ owners. Some of them were evidently Jewish such as the so-called “Jewish Hat” (a full portrait of the Jew covered with this characteristic hat) or a new moon depicted together with a star or hexagonal Star of David.<sup>26</sup> Jewish seals also provided an opportunity to display other traditional Jewish symbols such as the menorah, shofar, olive or palm branch, grapes and the Temple’s sacrificial altar.<sup>27</sup> These were often collaged with other motifs but clearly identified the seal’s holder as a Jew.

Iconographic symbols such as those described above provide a strong indication that seal’s owner was Jewish and a Hebrew inscription only confirmed this. Sometimes

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<sup>24</sup> Friedenberg 1987, 24.

<sup>25</sup> Friedenberg 1987, 94, no. 35; 96, no. 37.

<sup>26</sup> Friedenberg 1987, nos. 83, 183; 87, 190; 88, 192; 140, 260.

<sup>27</sup> Friedenberg 1987, 28–29.

the Hebrew language appeared alongside with Latin or the vernacular. Seals' inscriptions contained several types of information but usually included the name of the seal's owner (in many instances accompanied by his/her father's name). Daniel M. Friedenberg noted that the standard expression, describing the owner's father, included information whether or not he was still alive. If the father was a notable scholar or rabbi, it was also indicated in the inscription.<sup>28</sup>

Even though there are no preserved Jewish seals from the medieval Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, we can still attempt to reconstruct them by analyzing available artifacts from neighboring countries and provinces, especially those from Silesia and Hungary. One of the most interesting Jewish seals from this region is a golden signet ring found by Marcus Brann in Wroclaw in 1906.<sup>29</sup> This thirteenth-century reversible artifact belonged, according to the Hebrew inscription, to Abba ben Abba. Its edge was decorated with an image of a dragon and its rim with a head of an unrecognizable mythological animal. The face of the seal was adorned with a representation of unidentified bird with its head turned to the right and surrounded by small branches of a tree. The signet's reverse side showed an abbreviated Hebrew inscription deciphered by Marcus Brann as, "Increase my luck (happiness), do not diminish it. Amen, Amen. Amen. Selah. And nothing is here of the Amorites practice." The formula distancing the owner of the seal from "Amorites' practices" was employed to confirm that the inscription and ring itself were not connected with magic.<sup>30</sup>

Much less impressive are the preserved seals of Hungarian Jews: Mendel, the royal servant active in Hungary in the second part of the fifteenth century and his son Jacob. Their seals include the portrait of a Jew with a covered head and a lion on the rectangular shield, above which is located a Hebrew anagram composed of the letters *yod* and *mem* – the first letters of Jacob's Mendel name.<sup>31</sup>

More comparative material from the early modern period can also be found in the Polish-Lithuanian lands. Despite its late provenance, it is crucial for understanding the Jewish seals in Poland. Polish scholars A. Chmiel and Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa published several of such findings. Especially interesting are the seals from the first part of the sixteenth century, which belonged to three Ruthenian (Ukrainian) Jews: Moses Rabiejowicz, Wolczko ben Judah (both from Międzybóž) and Thowydzar from Szarawka. While Moses' seal (1539) was composed merely of an anagram of his name,<sup>32</sup> the seals of Wolczko (1543) and Thowydzar (1544) include more substantial iconographic material. An inscription engraved on Wolczko's seal contained his and his father's name and additional information on his Levite status. The Heraldic shield crowned with the crescent oriented towards the Star of David was placed beneath this inscription. A similar motif of the hexagonal star can be found on the seal of Thowydzar beneath his name.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Friedenberg 1987, 29–31.

<sup>29</sup> Brann 1907, 63–65; Friedenberg 1987, 191, no. 148.

<sup>30</sup> Brann 1907, 64–65; Friedenberg 1987, 192, no. 148.

<sup>31</sup> Friedenberg 1987, no. 165, 166, 167, 168, 327–328.

<sup>32</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 62.

<sup>33</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 66.

Jews also used personal seals in the late medieval and early modern period in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Already in 1489, the Jew Shavul Argonovicz accused another Jew Schan Eskovich of breaking the seal on the chest containing his valuables. The chest was deposited with Schan, and Shavul testified in royal court that some of its contents had disappeared. After the investigation, which was conducted by royal commissars, it was discovered that the seal was broken and the judge ordered Shavul to pay 50 threescore of *grosz* to Schan.<sup>34</sup> The case between Shavul and Schan is important in understanding further the history of Jewish sigillography. It proves that Jews used their seals not only to corroborate legal documents but also for various purposes such as securing their valuables. Despite such uncharacteristic applications of Jewish seals, these were still accepted as legally valid evidence by Christian courts.

Jewish seals are also mentioned in contracts for cinder delivery between Prince Fedor Sanguszko of Włodawa and Jewish merchants. In 1536, a Jew Illia Gyertsevich and his servant provided Prince Fedor Sanguszko with a financial guarantee on behalf of Moses of Lublin and Hayyim of Łuck. Illia assured the prince that they would pay for a large quantity of cinder (200 *łaszt*). He further issued a letter of guarantee with his signature in Hebrew and two personal seals. The first of the seals displayed the Star of David (*Magen David*), while the second had an unusual in Jewish iconography symbol of an anchor.<sup>35</sup> Moses of Lublin and Hayyim of Łuck also used their personal seals in the contract for cinder delivery with Prince Sanguszko.<sup>36</sup> A few years later, in 1539, the prince agreed to produce 100 *łaszt* of cinder in his forests of Włodawa and sell it to a Jew Ramail Moszkowicz of Bielsko. Both parties validated the contract with their seals; unfortunately, Ramail's seal was not legible.<sup>37</sup> Similarly illegible was the seal used by a Jew from Włodzimierz, Aaron Hawasowicz that was impressed on a legal document in the 1530s.<sup>38</sup> Isaac Doktorowicz of Beresteczko, a servant of a Jewish merchant Rubin Doktorowicz of Brześć (Lithuanian) also used his personal seal with the Star of David to validate his testimony in 1546. He recognized that Jenko Fedorowicz, the deputy *starost* from Włodzimierz delivered the cinder according the previous agreements between Rubin and Prince Fedor Sanguszko.<sup>39</sup>

Adam Chmiel, the Polish historian already mentioned in this text, published several important findings on Jewish seals from early modern Kraków. In 1550, Jol (Yol) of Kraków, son of David, impressed his seal on a debt letter. This seal contained a heraldic shield with rather a mysterious graphic (geometric) image on it. Chmiel identified it as an hourglass and compared it to a similar symbol that he had found on the sixteenth-century wine glass, the so-called *kidesh kos*.<sup>40</sup>

More complicated iconography was displayed on the golden signet ring of an anonymous Jew from Homel. We know about the provenance of this artifact from a fragmentary inscription (surrounded by the four-leaf stars), which preserved the name

<sup>34</sup> *Lithuanian Metrica. Book of Inscriptions (1479–1491)*, Vilnius 2004, 137.

<sup>35</sup> Gorczak 1890, 56, no. LII.

<sup>36</sup> Gorczak 1890, 57, no. LIII.

<sup>37</sup> Gorczak 1890, 214–215, no. CLXVI.

<sup>38</sup> Gorczak 1890, 562, no. CDXXIX.

<sup>39</sup> Gorczak 1890, 452–453, no. CCCLIX.

<sup>40</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 160–161.



of this Ruthenian town. It further included an image of a watering can placed on the heraldic shield – an ancient symbol of Levi's tribe. Arabic numerals, which together made the date of 1556, were engraved on the left and right sides of the badge.<sup>41</sup> Similar signet rings must have been widely used by Jews since we can find them even in the possession of Christians. Such rings were enlisted among the items that belonged to the municipal treasury of Kraków (1679).<sup>42</sup>

The watering can, a symbol of the Levitic tribe, also appeared much later on other seventeenth-century Jewish seals such as Aaron Levi's seal (1654). The seals of *kohanim* (Jews of priestly lineage) were decorated with ancient symbols of the blessed hands (seal of Isaac Cohen, 1654), while the sacrificial basket was adorned with a crown (a seal of Marek Szydłowski – 1660). At the same time, we still find seals without any images and accompanied only by an inscription with the name of their owners (seals of Jekusiel, son of Zalman, 1654 and of Marek Wloch, Jew from Kazimierz near Kraków, 1623).<sup>43</sup>

Much richer iconography characterized the late eighteen-century seals. These were decorated with the images of palm trees, ritual symbols, lions, etc. Such fine and complicated images were engraved on the triangular seal of Abraham Zwi and his family (son Jacob and daughter Esther Beile).<sup>44</sup> Moreover, eighteenth-century Jewish seals often contained halachically-prohibited images of a man (a young man with a bow hunting for unidentifiable bird) were engraved on a beautiful reversible seal of Salomon, son of Joachim.<sup>45</sup>

Another seal of the Węgrów *kehilla* belonged to the category of very rare Jewish communal seals. It was used in 1797 but did not contain any iconographic images.<sup>46</sup>

We can get some idea of how the Jewish seal stamp looked like from an article published by Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa in 1950. Here, she found an interesting and unique example of the silver Jewish stamp of Pynchas son of Shulom (perhaps from the second part of sixteenth century) with a Hebrew inscription and an image of a deer (or ox), a symbol of Joseph's or Naphtali's tribe. Interestingly, the handle of the seal served as a box for cosmetic accessories.<sup>47</sup>

This article attempts to investigate the use of Jewish seals and signet rings in the medieval and subsequently early modern Poland. Jews needed and used such seals to corroborate and authenticate important commercial and credit operations or contracts. It is also proof of their strong legal standing in the economic life of late medieval and early modern Poland.

Jews used their seals for concluding legal activities among themselves, with non-Jews (as in the case of Schachno of Lwów and Kaleff of Caffa) and more importantly in the public sphere of life (as it was in case of Lewko, who corroborated a document issued together with the municipal authorities of Kraków). A Jewish seal appended to

<sup>41</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 390–392.

<sup>42</sup> Muczkowski 1906, 49.

<sup>43</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 62–67.

<sup>44</sup> Chmiel 1899/1902, 114–116.

<sup>45</sup> Chmiel 1903, 162–163.

<sup>46</sup> Chmiel 1903, 164.

<sup>47</sup> Kozłowska-Budkowa 1950, 491.

a document constituted equally important legal proof of its validity for Jewish and Christian courts as the signatures and witnesses.

As already underlined, we do not have any examples of medieval Jewish seals preserved from Poland. Nevertheless, it should be assumed that they were similar in their iconography to the contemporary seals produced in the Ashkenazi world. Jewish seals contained Hebrew-language inscriptions and sometimes images indicating the Jewishness of their owners.

This article is only a small contribution to our knowledge of the history of Jewish seals in medieval and early modern Poland. It is possible that further archival research as well as an analysis of available secondary sources will shed more light on this important aspect of Jewish material and legal culture.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AGZ–O. Pietruszki, X. Liske (eds.), *Akta Grodzkie i Ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z archiwum t. z. w. bernardyńskiego we Lwowie*, vol. XIV, Lwów 1889.

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Anna Rutkowski

## THE BEGINNING OF EARLY MODERN YIDDISH HISTORIOGRAPHY IN ASHKENAZ

The main purpose of this paper will be to present the origins and growth of the popularity of historical writing in Yiddish in the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Ashkenazi Diaspora. This issue is linked directly to Jewish attitudes toward history and historical writing in this period and the placement of historiographical works in Yiddish into the mainstream of Jewish Culture. I would like to demonstrate their close relationship with medieval historical writing in Hebrew.

The number of papers and articles in specialist journals dealing with this subject is far from impressive. Researchers have focused mainly on works written in Hebrew by authors from both the Sephardic and the Ashkenazi Jewish communities. The trend begun by Y.H. Yerushalmi of studies on Jewish historiography has essentially not included the literature we are interested in. Another great historian of the last generation, S.W. Baron, also focused mainly on so-called “historical literature” in Hebrew. Moshe Rosman, in his book *How Jewish is Jewish History?*, in general did not mention Yiddish historiography of that time.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the majority of works were usually devoted to one narrow subject, and hence there is a definite lack of a systematic survey of early modern historiography in Yiddish and attempts at putting together the works of individual researchers. What is more, there are hardly any works written in Polish. There is, then, a real need to carry out systematic research and multi-faceted analysis of the resources that would surely contribute to a better understanding of the mentality of the Jews in the Ashkenazi Diasporas. Furthermore we should state that the vast majority of early modern Yiddish texts have never been subjected to any serious scholarly examination, so we still lack a comprehensive study of the contents of works classified as historical literature.

Primarily we should consider the Jewish attitudes toward history and historical writing in this period. History and historical awareness in Jewish society has for many centuries functioned on the margins of Jewish social and cultural life.<sup>2</sup> The most important task for Jewish scholars was to study the details of Talmudic law and the issues from the field of mystics and theology, entirely apart from historical questions. This type of content was never of prime importance. Such an approach was largely the effect of understanding the philosophy of the history of the Jewish nation in the Diaspora, according to which the history of the chosen nation is a stage in the realization of the divine plan manifested in the history of the world and, in particular, in the special place and role assigned to the Jews.

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<sup>1</sup> See Baron 1958; Yerushalmi 1982 (and 1988); Rosman 2007.

<sup>2</sup> See Bonfil 1997, 9.

As Rosman claims, “such an attitude towards ‘Jewish history’ as a special subset of ‘history’, in addition to whatever general rules there were, was bound by the terms of God’s covenant with Israel.”<sup>3</sup> Writing about historical events and their analysis made sense if it fulfilled for future generations *zakhor*, the religious maintaining of memory. In no case were these Jewish authors capable of interpreting content without religious context. The most important issue was the eschatological dimension. Biblical history was too holy to be the object of historical research. Post-biblical stories written after the destruction of the Second Temple were read in the context of the expectation of the final salvation by the Messiah. It seems that this was the main reason why the two main branches of Jewish historiography in the Middle Ages, the Ashkenazi Crusader chronicles and the Sephardi chains of tradition, both had a religious function in remembering the martyrs and the rabbinical hierarchy. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century appeared a whole corpus of chronicles dealing with the expulsion from Spain in 1492. Its function was also the remembrance of the victims of the Inquisition, although a new interest in European politics arose too. The historiographic works at that time were mostly written in Hebrew. This might not be surprising, since Hebrew was the language of the intellectual and religious elites. This combination resulted in a Hebrew historiography that was produced by the literate class and interwoven in religious discourse.

Undoubtedly, this type of writing was not appreciated by a rabbinic orthodoxy that was concerned about the discussion of dogmatic and doctrinal purity. Negative attitudes towards history entered Jewish thought along the same path, as did the change of attitude towards other profane activities cultivated almost innocently by medieval Jewish society. Halakhic rigidity over this issue was one of the particular aspects of the general process of building a Jewish identity in the medieval Diaspora. Similarly, the Jewish historical writers in the early modern period, being socially dependent from the rabbinical and administrative establishment, were well aware of these sensibilities. They therefore evaded critical positions, concentrated on the facts and stories themselves, and only introduced new facts and stories that were thought not to harm the interests of the Jewish community.

Jewish chronicles dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Hebrew had a framework similar to the first of this type of chronicle, David Gans’ *Zemah david* (Prague, 1592), and were divided in two sections. One part covered the history of the Jews, the other that of other nations. Both “reviewed all of the events the authors considered to be significant from the creation of the world until their own times,”<sup>4</sup> and followed the example of very popular medieval works such as the anonymous *Sefer Yosippon*.<sup>5</sup> In these books was expressed the conviction that “Jewish history was governed by different rules and was headed for a different destiny from the rest of humankind’s history. According to early modern historiographers, the Jews had a special relationship with God and, while He managed all history, He situated theirs in the reward-and-punishment and exile-and-redemption matrices that were delineated long ago in the

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<sup>3</sup> Rosman 2007, 43. See also Bonfil 1997, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Rosman 2007, 43.

<sup>5</sup> See Flusser 1978/1980.

Bible.”<sup>6</sup> This attitude was changed by the Haskalah movement, and mainly it was brought about by the activity of the German Jews with the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, who were extremely conscious of the importance of historical problems.<sup>7</sup> It was then that the breakthrough and the redefining of the former intellectual ideas took place. If we discuss the previous period, however, we must take into account the peculiarities of works dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries, in terms of both their content and their methodology.

Yiddish chronicles, which have survived in small numbers to the present, were basically free translations of popular authors writing in Hebrew as well as various compilations of texts. In Zinberg’s *History of Yiddish Literature* a few works were mentioned which were translated from Hebrew. The most popular was a Yiddish translation of the well-known *Sefer Yosippon*, published in Zurich in 1546 by a convert to Christianity, Michael Adam, following the later Hebrew version that Tam Ibn Yahya published in Constantinople in 1510. This book included stories about the fates of the Jews in the Diaspora and found enormous favor among ordinary readers, and was therefore soon reprinted and appeared several times in various translations and editions. As early as 1591 an anonymous translation appeared in Krakow of Salomon ibn Verga’s popular historical chronicle *Shevet Yehuda*. This work also enjoyed great success among the people and was reprinted a number of times.

Michael Stanislawski speculates that, although we do not know anything about the author of the translation, his background might have been similar to that of the publisher of the work, about whom we know a good deal: Isaak ben Aaron Prosnitz. He was one of the most important Hebrew and Yiddish printers in Poland in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was born in Prosnitz, Moravia, and learned the art of Hebrew printing in Venice. From there he came to Krakow, where in 1567 he was granted a privilege by King Zygmunt August II to remain in Poland for 50 years, and then founded a publishing house. Of the 200 books published by him and his descendants, 73 were in Yiddish and included both original works, such as the *Brant Spiegel* and *Seyfer Mitsves Nashim*, and many translations into the vernacular of liturgical works as well as the books of Samuel, Song of Songs, Psalms and Daniel, the ethical works of the great luminaries of Polish Jewery, including Moses Iserles, Salomon Luria, and Mordecai Jaffe.<sup>8</sup>

However, not all the Hebrew chronicles translated into Yiddish found a wide audience. A good example is the abovementioned David Gans’ *Zemah david* (Prague, 1592), translated into Yiddish and published by Solomon Hanau in Frankfurt-am-Main in 1698. This chronicle was originally written in an official style that frightened away simple and uneducated readers. Though Gans’ annals are very dry and have no great intrinsic value, they are noted as the first work of this kind among the German Jews,

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<sup>6</sup> Rosman 2007, 43.

<sup>7</sup> However, L. Hecht (2005, 347) claims that Prague was a center of Jewish historical writing before the birth of *Wissenschaft*, and the historical narratives of three distinct Bohemian *maskilim*, Peter Beer (1758–1838), Salomo Löwisohn (1789 en 1821), and Marcus Fischer (1788–1858) are shown to illustrate the options available to Jewish historians before institutionalized German historicism came to dominate the field.

<sup>8</sup> Stanislawski 1998, 137.

who at that time appreciated historical knowledge, but at a distance. Indeed, in his preface to the second volume the author deemed it necessary to justify himself for having dealt with so profane a subject as the annals of general history, and endeavored to demonstrate that it was permitted to read history on Saturdays. The case of the chronicle *Jeven Metzula (The Abyss of Despair)*, published in Venice in 1653 and written by the historian, Talmudist, and cabalist Natan Hannover, was considerably better. The rhymed version of this book, describing events during the Chmielnicky Uprising, was published by Moses Abraham ben Amsterdam two years later, and immediately achieved publishing success. The *Jeven Metzula* passed through many Yiddish editions, especially among the Polish Jews, because Hannover gave in his work a very vivid account of Jewish life in Poland and of the *yeshivot*. He also provided a brief description of the Polish government of the time and its relationship with the Cossacks, and thus indirectly indicates the causes which led to the Cossack insurgency.

This is not the only historical literature in Yiddish, however. Subsequently there came into being works originally written in Yiddish, describing present events in European-Jewish society. These comprise numerous, usually short and anonymous reports about pogroms, expulsions, and accusations of ritual murder and of using human blood (allegedly, the blood of Christian children was especially coveted, the so-called “blood libel”) in Jewish rituals, which had the purpose of keeping these sad events alive for descendants. They were not chronicles in the strict sense, but rather the legacy that authors wanted to preserve of the memory of these traumatic occurrences for the next generation, depicting the medieval nature of this type of writing about the Jewish past. To this circle undoubtedly belongs the anonymous account about the expulsion of the Jews from Worms in 1636. The book, entitled *Tzores Wermayze*, was first published in 1898. In another work, published in 1669, were described the miserable results of the accusation of blood libel towards Rafael Levi in Metz. On the title page was an explanation of why it had been written and for whom: “Be seen and read, to all of us, men and women, boys and girls may the miracles God has done for us to protect us from Israel’s enemies. Therefore may everyone study to serve Him with their whole soul. Amen.”<sup>9</sup> Works responding to numerous anti-Jewish incidents also came into being in Poland during the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, for instance, Haim Alshech published *Teshuat Israel*, which was translated into Yiddish and contained three separate reports about an accusation of blood libel in Viterbo, Italy, in 1706.

Yerushalmi remarked that nearly all of these works were prompted by the traumatic expulsion from cities and countries in western Europe or by the Chmielnicky massacres in the Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an event which forced a new consideration of historical events, especially persecutions. Yet its principal effect was to arouse once again the problem of theodicy and to intensify messianic hopes. With the exception of the Hebrew chronicle of Solomon Ibn Verga and Azariah de’Rossi, there is little evidence among the 16<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>-century writers of the critical temper which characterized the Renaissance. Moreover, as we

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<sup>9</sup> Zinberg 1975, 230.

mentioned above, interest in post-biblical historical events still remained on the periphery of Jewish memory and outside the mainstream of Jewish creativity in the early modern period. Only in this period would it become central and the earlier works be held up as precedents.

In many cases Jewish writers were influenced by the works of the Protestant Reformation's authors, particularly French and German historiography. This proves that the Jewish philosophers and scholars writing in Yiddish were in touch with European culture, and their works are largely the reflection of the then-current trends prevailing in West European historical writings. It requires further study, however, to find out to what extent they had adopted the critical instruments and the methodology worked out by the European historians of the modern times and what role was played in this process by historians writing in Hebrew. The attention of the outer world was drawn by the later fate of the Jews. Schudt, in his *Jüdische Merckwürdigkeiten*, gave a short history of the past and a fairly accurate and complete account of the contemporary condition of the Jews. He was followed by Jacob Christian Basnage, who for the first time put in systematic form an account of the history of the Jews during the Christian centuries. His work remained for a long time the chief source of information to the outer world on Jewish history.

The first Jewish author to address the issue of the legitimacy of using non-Jewish authors was the Hebrew writer Azariah de' Rossi, who selected and translated this type of texts, after careful editing which might often have been sheer manipulation. Menachem Man ben Salomon Halevi Amelander followed the same path in Yiddish.<sup>10</sup> A prominent scholar, historian, translator, Hebrew grammarian and one of the most eminent Hebrew and Yiddish publishers in Holland, Menahem Man was born in Amsterdam to a rich Jewish family in about 1698 and studied for a few years in Prague. He translated into Yiddish numerous popular Hebrew works, including a bilingual edition of the Bible published in conjunction with his brother-in-law Eliezer Zussman Rodelsheim (Amsterdam, 1725–1729). In the preface of *Sherit Yisroel*,<sup>11</sup> he explained that he decided to print the Yiddish translation of the *Sefer Josippon* with a short history of Jewry from the destruction of the Second Temple until the year 1743 to show the broader Ashkenazi audience the fate of the Jews in the Diaspora. This book was printed in Amsterdam in 1743 and completely unknown to Polish scholars and not translated into the Polish language.

According to Yerushalmi, the value of Menachem Man's chronicle from a methodological point of view is rather poor, but it should be considered as a very interesting source of cultural and social life and used as a history of individual local Jewish communities regarding various cultural and economic dependencies and separation from the predominantly Christian society.<sup>12</sup> Although the author dedicated a large part of his work to ancient and medieval Jewish history, we can also find in his chronicle a rich as well as unusually interesting description of Ashkenazi communities

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<sup>10</sup> For information on Menachem Man ben Salomon Halevi Amelander's biography, see Reizen 1914, 58–59.

<sup>11</sup> Hominer 1964.

<sup>12</sup> Yerushalmi 1982, 133.

in many European countries and the decline of individual centers of Jewish community, including Poland after the tragic events of the Cossack Uprising of 1648–1656.

The author employed various sources, of both Jewish and Christian provenance, and used a comparatively rich critical apparatus to present the wide political and cultural development of European Jewry. He was mainly influenced by the Jewish history of Basnage and the impact of the Dutch cultural environment which induced him to write in Yiddish, the language of the common people.<sup>13</sup> For these reasons, his work constitutes an unusually valuable investigative material for scholars studying the history of Jewish “collective memory.” His chronicle was the main inspiration for other history books written in 18<sup>th</sup> century Amsterdam. These works are to be qualified as contemporary history. They deal with a short period of time and concentrate on the Jewish and general history of Amsterdam and the Dutch Republic.

The origins and the growth in popularity of historical writing in Yiddish might be explained by the development of publishing activity among Jews and the growth of the audience of the so called vernacular literature for which Yiddish – the language of women and uneducated men – was the carrier. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Jewish historiography moved from the Hebrew domain into the Yiddish one. Yiddish had been the daily language of Ashkenazi Jews throughout Europe since the Middle Ages. Yiddish books were aimed at a larger public and dealt mainly with popular devotion, ethics and practical life, the so-called *Musar*-literature. Yiddish chronicles and historical works functioned partially as such literature for common people. Jacob ben Mattathias, publisher of a Yiddish translation of *Tam ve-Yashar* in 1670, declared on the title page: “Because in this book are related the deeds that God, Blessed Be He, did from the creation of the world until Joshua brought the people of Israel into Palestine, we have translated it from Hebrew into Judeo-German, so that all may know the miracles and wonders.”<sup>14</sup> In similar words an anonymous author of a Yiddish translation *Shvet Yehudah* described his publishing intention: “Well translated in brief, for reading by common householders, men and women. One will find in it wonderful stories that happened to our ancestors in exile, and how many times they sanctified God’s name... With it man will awaken his heart to the fear of God. May God further preserve His People and send the redeemer, the Messiah, Son of David speedily, in our days. Amen.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, we should enquire about the place of such works in the mainstream of Jewish, and especially Yiddish, literature. Although there was a wide readership of Yiddish historical works, this issue requires further research.

In summary, I hope I have demonstrated in this short review the beginnings and development of historical writing in Yiddish among the Jews in the early modern period. I have also tried to explain their attitudes toward history during this time. We should search for the roots of modern Jewish historiography in the later period, that is, the Haskalah movement, as in the 16<sup>th</sup> century processes began which culminated in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup>. While it is true that in the early modern period, Yiddish writers copied and developed the Hebrew works, they nevertheless accomplished a very

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<sup>13</sup> See Fuks 1981, 170.

<sup>14</sup> Zinberg 1975, 232.

<sup>15</sup> Zinberg 1975, 230.



important task: they gave common readers entertainment in their spare time and moral edification as well. The chroniclers brought knowledge from the Hebrew corpus of the religious establishment into the language of the whole Ashkenazi community, just as they imported knowledge from the Christian society into the Jewish community, by using various Christian sources. They can be called the gatekeepers, who transmitted knowledge from the Hebrew and non-Jewish domains into the Yiddish. By analyzing early modern Jewish historical works in Yiddish we can focus on their function in Jewish culture throughout the centuries as well as their place in the realm of general historical analyses.

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Andreas Lehnardt

**BIBLICAL CRITICISM IN NAHMAN KROCHMAL'S WRITINGS.  
Between Rabbinical Tradition and Galician Enlightenment\***

### Introduction

Nachman (ha-Kohen) Krochmal, born 1785 in Brody, at that time part of the Habsburg realm, is among the forerunners of the science of Judaism, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>1</sup> His main work, called *More nevu'ke ha-zeman*, in imitation of the title of the great philosophical work of Maimonides (d. 1204), "Guide for the Perplexed of the time,"<sup>2</sup> was edited posthumously by Leopold Zunz in 1850.<sup>3</sup> On account of its thematic breadth and linguistic freshness, it was counted from an early stage among the classics of modern Hebrew. In it, in 17 *she'arim* or gates, on approximately 600 closely printed pages, Krochmal, or Ranak as he was known after his acronym, develops a philosophy of the history of the Jews as the "eternal nation," the *'am 'olam*, that treads its path through all the ups and downs of history, running in cyclical paths.<sup>4</sup> In contrast to the nations, it is not subject to the laws developed, among others, by Herder, according to which a nation can only live through a period of climax once.<sup>5</sup> Apart from such clear influences of contemporary idealistic philosophy and historiography, Krochmal, who learned German as an autodidact,<sup>6</sup> also took numerous exegetes into account, in particular also those of non-Jewish origin.<sup>7</sup> In his environment, the East Galician Judaism shaped by *Hassidism* and *Mitnagdim*, this meant progress towards a more rational view of the genesis of the Bible and thus of the beginnings of the Judaism of which Krochmal considered himself a scion.<sup>8</sup>

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\* In memory of Professor Dr. Margarete Schlüter, Frankfurt on Main, who heard an earlier version of this paper at the Eighth EAJIS Congress in Moscow, July 23<sup>rd</sup>–27<sup>th</sup> 2006 and supported my interest in Krochmal from its early beginnings.

<sup>1</sup> For a short biographical sketch and bibliography see Lehnardt 2007a, 941–952. Krochmal died 1840 in Tarnopol.

<sup>2</sup> On Krochmal's reception of Moshe ben Maimon's thought see Lehnardt 2004, 427–448.

<sup>3</sup> The influence of Krochmal on Zunz is difficult to discern. See however Zunz 1845, 113–122, reprinted in Zunz 1878, 150–159, reprinted Hildesheim, New York 1976, 150–159.

<sup>4</sup> For a survey of this cyclical historiography see Schlüter 1990, 175–205. In Lehnardt 2007b, 374–375 a schematic analysis of his concept of history is presented.

<sup>5</sup> For a general introduction see Harris 1991; Feiner 2000, 115–137.

<sup>6</sup> On Krochmal's attitude toward German see, e.g., the letters he wrote in German, and also Krochmal, *The Writings*, p. 452, letter 17.

<sup>7</sup> He explicitly cites the works of Dähne 1834 and Neander 1818 (a neophyt!). In one instance he quotes Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, Vol. 1–2, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Leipzig 1834.

<sup>8</sup> On the development of *Hasidism* in East Galicia at that time see Mahler 1985. An informative description of the situation is also provided by Krochmal's disciple J.-H. Schorr (1883, 283–284).

In the following I would therefore like to examine Krochmal's handling of Biblical texts as the source of his cyclical philosophy of history, developing in synthetic phases in each case. In the first section, I shall deal with Krochmal's predecessors; I shall then present the typical from Krochmal's point of view; finally, I shall attempt to fit the findings into place in Krochmal's age and his whole work.

### **Krochmal's predecessors**

Krochmal's access to Biblical texts (or the *Tanakh*) and his relationship to the growing critical Biblical scholarship of his age – both in the Christian and in the Jewish world – has been little examined up to now.<sup>9</sup> On the one hand, this is certainly due to the fact that his work cannot be described as being exegetic in the real sense of the term. Krochmal probably did not consider himself as a *parshan* in the original sense of the word, and this even if one recognizes that he did present numerous individual exegeses in the *More* and also attempted to incorporate their results directly into his account of history.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps he saw himself more as a *darshan*, a preacher, since we know that he used to preach in the synagogue of his hometown. However, exegetical studies of the Biblical text were not the main goal of his thinking, and we must always bear in mind that the *Tanakh* served him mainly as a historical source and the starting point of his historiosophical thinking.

Nevertheless, the Galician scholar himself clarifies his intentions even at the beginning of the second gate, emphasizing that it “is not for instance” our intention “here and subsequently to raise exegetic questions and to interpret Biblical passages in the sense of the *darshanim*.”<sup>11</sup> Rather it is explained that what really matters for him is just an explanation of such verses and words in the Bible which could support his system and his interpretation of history.

What is of interest for us here initially is which Jewish precursors he had with regard to his dealings with Biblical texts and to what extent he was able to take up from his predecessors. The Jewish Biblical exegesis in the epoch of the Haskala, the emancipation or enlightenment, had already fundamentally changed compared with that of the Jewish Middle Ages.<sup>12</sup> In particular, responsible for this can be held the fact that the science of exegesis, which had become an independent discipline in the

<sup>9</sup> See on this especially Lilienblum 1970, 149. On Krochmal as Bible scholar see Soloveitchik/Rubatschov 1925, 150–154; Weissblueth 1981, 7–82 (Hebrew); Greenbaum 1983, 101–105. See also Tirosh-Samuelson 2004, 1948–1975, esp. 1968–1969.

<sup>10</sup> See on this Weissblueth 1981, 23.

<sup>11</sup> Cited according to Krochmal 1961, 10. This edition is based on the second and corrected edition: *More neboche ha-seman sive Director errantium nostrae aetatis, Opus ad illustrandas Judaeorum antiquitates et leges, Philosophiamque, inprimis celeberrimi Aben Esrae doctrinam de divino scripsit Nachman Krochmal incola Zolkieviensis jubente Auctore digestum praefatione instructum et editum a L. Zunz, secunda emeliorate editio augmentata per biographiam ejus et alcuinis litteris ejusdem a Michael Wolf magistri religionis, Lemberg 1863* (Hebrew). On the making of the *More nevuhe ha-zeman* see Schorsch 1986, 281–315.

<sup>12</sup> On the development, which started already in the early modern period, see e.g. Elbaum 1990, 82–153.

Christian, in particular the Protestant sphere – also moving, among other things, historic questioning to the centre of interest – was exercising an ever greater influence on its environment. As a consequence, the Biblical text became an object of *literary* analysis, and also linked with this in the Jewish sphere was the fact that the exegesis no longer had to serve solely homiletic or halakhic concerns, but also had an educational effect, i.e. it could also benefit the propagation of the objectives of the Haskala.<sup>13</sup>

In this connection, the two most important representatives of an “enlightened” Biblical criticism in Germany, Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) and Naftali Hartwig Wessely (also known as Weisel or Wesel) (1725–1805), had already considered the Biblical text not only in terms of its literary aspects. As is well known, Mendelssohn, who, with the help of numerous scholars, had translated the Hebrew Bible into German (using Hebrew script),<sup>14</sup> wanted to achieve an “improvement” in the living circumstances and the intellectual state of his Jewish co-religionists with this “Commentary”: the translation commentary, published under the title *Sefer netivot ha-shalom*, was intended to replace the Yiddish and Christian translations in circulation, thus making the Bible the centre of studies, and pushing the study of the Talmud into the background. In addition, Mendelssohn intended to give a modern commentary, in keeping with his age, on dark passages.<sup>15</sup> In this connection, he saw the Torah quite traditionally as a reliable and holy source of historiography which was identical, with regard to its ethical statements, to the eternal rational truths. Thus he writes at the beginning of his introduction to the *Bi'ur*:

Whether now immediately this divine Book, which we have received through Moses, is really intended to be a book of the law, and to contain ordinances, rules of life and regulations; it does, as is well known, nevertheless also include an unfathomable abundance of rational truths and religious instructions which are so closely connected with the Laws that they constitute just one. All the laws refer to, or are based on, eternal rational truths, or recall and provoke reflection on the same; so that our rabbis rightly say: the laws and teachings behave towards one another like body and soul.<sup>16</sup>

Consequently, according to Mendelssohn, the Torah was transmitted by God directly to Israel, yet only with respect to its principles, without any commentary and explanations, verbally to Moses; it was only through him that it was written down in the form known to us today, i.e. with a commentary.<sup>17</sup>

Krochmal seems to have particularly clearly adapted this fundamental insight, which was based ultimately on rabbinical traditions, through Mendelssohn's mediation.<sup>18</sup> However, whereas in Mendelssohn's work the commandments were given so that one would examine one's deeds in order thus to come to the real goal, namely to the recognition of the “divine truths” – to be precise in part the “eternal truths” and in part the “historical truths”<sup>19</sup> – this idea specifically of Mendelssohn's recedes into the background in Krochmal's work in favor of his historical-philosophical account.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Segal 1952, 114–116.

<sup>14</sup> On this epochal work see Altmann 1973, 368–420; see also Feiner 2002, 127–134.

<sup>15</sup> On the aims of the *Bi'ur* cf. The foreword in the first volume by Mendelssohn 1846. See also Horowitz 1983, 113–136, esp. 114; and now cf. also Feiner 2002, 118.

<sup>16</sup> Mendelssohn 2001, 95.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Mendelssohn 1846, VII–VIII (in the foreword of the *Bi'ur*).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Weissblueth 1981, 12.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Mendelssohn 2001, 123.

To what extent Wessely, a native of Hamburg, also influenced Krochmal is more difficult to elicit than in Mendelssohn's case. Wessely belonged, as is well known, to Mendelssohn's circle, and compiled, for example, the commentary on the Book of Leviticus for the *Bi'ur*.<sup>20</sup> However, despite his close co-operation with Mendelssohn, he was also an exegete in his own right, who, with his work *Levanon* (or *Gan Na'ul*; Vilnius 1772), compiled an independent grammatical commentary on the synonyms in the Bible. Krochmal seems to have known this work, even if he does not mention or quote Wessely in any place. However, in his foreword to the work, written in Hebrew, Wessely expresses himself on the method in a form which closely recalls Krochmal:

And my soul knows very exactly that this is the Torah, which Moses gave to the Children of Israel, together with the Commentary, as our fathers, of blessed memory, received it. They are the words of the living God, none of which will fall to the ground. However, if they are far removed from the understanding of the scholars or the knowledge of the wise in their insight, in that they show themselves arrogant in their understanding and in their impiousness even doubt their truth, then they shall walk in darkness...<sup>21</sup>

For Wessely, the written *and* oral Torah are accordingly the signposts for man's correct behavior: "therefore God gave the Torah and the Mitzvot so that man shall sanctify and cleanse himself."<sup>22</sup>

The Torah is divine and is also able to show man the right way, even if he cannot always understand this, and this contradicts his nature. Indeed, man is not at all capable of recognizing the truth of the Torah to its full extent, even if he is a great scholar. In this connection, the Torah was not just given to individual human beings, but to Israel as a people; in this respect Israel was "an adornment among the nations."<sup>23</sup> The Torah was given to Israel by Moses; he alone possessed the special prophetic gift of interpreting it – that gift that was also claimed by later generations, in order to understand the laws. These "Secrets of the Commentary" – incidentally similar to a chapter in *More nevukhe ha-zeman* – were "passed on orally, from generation to generation, down to the present day."<sup>24</sup> Like Mendelssohn, Wessely thus adhered to the absolute divine inspiration of the Torah; however, it required an interpretation which was itself no longer divine.

In contrast to the older tradition, though, as had been set down, for instance, by Maimonides in his foreword to *Mishne Torah*,<sup>25</sup> according to Wessely and Ranak not all oral "commentaries" on the Torah, i.e. the Oral Torah, were revealed already to Moses on Sinai, but just their most important principles. The details and explanations of cases could not have yet been handed down to Moses. Rather they were only found subsequently and added to the Oral Torah. While according to the Rambam all the commandments together with their implementing regulations had already been revealed to Moses, Wessely and then also Krochmal state that, even after the *matan*

<sup>20</sup> Cf. e.g. Klausner 1952, I, 95; Lachower 1955, 65–77. On his personality and point of view in the *haskala* cf. also Schulte 2002, 85–88.

<sup>21</sup> Wessely 1772, 10 (in the foreword).

<sup>22</sup> Wessely 1772, heder 3, halon 7, p. 50.

<sup>23</sup> Wessely 1772, heder 5, halon 5, p. 66.

<sup>24</sup> Wessely 1772, heder 7, halon 5, p. 102.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Mishneh Torah. The Book of Knowledge by Maimonides*. Edited According to the Bodleian (Oxford) Codex with Introduction... and English Translation by M. Hymanson, Jerusalem 1965, p. 1b.

*Torah*, the presentation of Torah on Sinai, they were left to a further interpretation and an organic development process.<sup>26</sup>

As a result, not only on account of the choice of language, but also because of his organic history of law thinking, Wessely will thus have to be regarded as being more likely a precursor of Krochmal than Mendelssohn.<sup>27</sup>

### **Krochmal's exegesis and dealings with the Bible**

As explained at the beginning, the examination of the Bible in Krochmal's work does not represent a goal in itself; Ranak does not, for instance, write a continuous commentary on Biblical books, but merely integrates exegetic comments into the individual chapters of his account of history and, finally, in Gate 17 ("The Wisdom of the Poor") of his book, also adds transcripts from the commentary of the great Sephardic scholar Avraham Ibn Ezra (d. 1164) on some sections of the *Tanakh* that are of interest for him. Some explanations are also to be found implicitly in his recording of history, thus above all in the comments in Gate 11 ("The Study of the 'Fathers'").<sup>28</sup> However, these "additional comments" on the historiographical chapters 9–10<sup>29</sup> mainly serve historical research, especially with regard to the period of the Second Temple, not for instance the Halakhah finding or the haggadic edification; at first glance they do not follow any historiosophical concern either. In them, Krochmal deals just with such passages from the Scriptures which settle something for his recording of history, while he does not go into more detail on the other parts of the Bible. Particular attention should be drawn to the studies on the Deutero-Isaiah, in which, however, his dependence on Ibn Ezra is most clearly to be recognized, especially with regard to the question whether the Book of Isaiah was written by one or more authors.<sup>30</sup> He also explains some psalms, from which, in his opinion, something is to be deduced about the state of the nation at the time of the Babylonian Exile, the return from exile and the Hasmoneans.<sup>31</sup> Finally he deals with the question of the origin of the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Books of Chronicles, the Book of Ezekiel, the Book of the Twelve Prophets, the Book of Daniel, the Book of Esther and of Kohelet. He did indeed

<sup>26</sup> See on this also the chapter of the introduction to my forthcoming translation of the *More nevu'ke ha-zeman*. Cf. also Weissblueth 1981, 13, and see also Bialoblozky 1941, 345–380, here p. 346.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Weissblueth (1981, 11), who correctly remarks that the title *honoris causae* "Der galizische Mendelssohn" coined by M. Weissberg (1927, 371–379) is misleading. More adequately he might be nicknamed the "Wessely of Galicia." Remarkably, Harris does not even consider Wessely's influence on Krochmal.

<sup>28</sup> On this cf. also Harris (1991, 159), who concentrates on Krochmal's exegetical work in chapter 11 of the *More* only. He does not deal with the other chapters and passages with a clear exegetical character.

<sup>29</sup> It means not only in the preceding chapter as mentioned in the subtitle of sha'ar 11. See Rawidowicz, Mavo, in: Krochmal 1961, 125.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 114 ff (note 2 – to p. 43); see also his citations of the commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah in chapter 17, Krochmal 1961, 351 ff. In my view Harris 1991, 163 (and elsewhere) overlooks the dependence of Krochmal from Ibn Ezra's commentaries. Instead he emphasizes the challenge of Lutheran Bible criticism, especially that of J.G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, Vol. 1–5, Leipzig 1780–1783, 4<sup>th</sup> edition 1823–1824. This widely spread introduction is, however, never cited explicitly by Krochmal.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 118 ff (note 3 – to p. 46).

announce that he would also deal with the Book of Job, but he does not seem to have got round to this any more, and this although he does point out elsewhere that the “the importance of the Book of Job exceeds that of the Book of Kohelet as greatly as the distance between Heaven and Earth.”<sup>32</sup> He also announced a study of the Proverbs of Solomon and the Song of Songs, without their being found in his work.<sup>33</sup> He leaves other books practically disregarded, because they do not provide anything for his historiographical and philosophical questions. Thus he remarks, for instance, with regard to Joel 4:6.

From this it is apparent for the intelligent person that the prophecies of Joel are not among the oldest and that on no account were they written earlier than Ezra, which would, admittedly, drag out their explanation here, and this is not necessary for our desired objective.<sup>34</sup>

The traditional order and chronological sequence of the Books of the Prophets is not even questioned by him in this respect,<sup>35</sup> although this was already very widespread especially in the Christian exegesis of his age. Rather, he summarizes his dealings with Biblical scriptures and the objectives followed by him by this with respect to the Book of Kohelet as follows:

For the sake of the exertion lying before us in this gate devoted to the examination of the generations [viz. Gate 11] and in order to be able to show everything in it correctly, we must now talk about the content of the Book of Kohelet: who wrote it when, and who included it among the Ketuvim.<sup>36</sup>

However, apart from such historiographical interest in Biblical scriptures, a further aspect of dealing with the *Tanakh* appears: the Bible is one, if not *the* source of tradition.<sup>37</sup> And from this it follows for him almost inevitably that he is only prepared for criticism of the Biblical text in those places in which he points out an obvious historical inconsistency which could jeopardize this tradition. By contrast, in places where no danger for the tradition is to be discerned, he follows the Biblical wording, in particular with regard to the wording in the Five Books of Moses.<sup>38</sup> The historical and traditional truth of the Torah is irrefutably certain for him, and also for Mendelssohn and Wessely:

When writing our Holy Scripture, however, in particular when writing the Torah of the Lord – every sensible and sagacious person knows this – every form of formulation and copying in our work for two thousand years, despite all the discoveries and inquiries which we have made, has always been the

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 148.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 102.

<sup>34</sup> Krochmal 1961, 160. See also the partial translation of this crucial passage by Harris 1991, 160.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 130: “Those [Biblical] books with a known date were put into the order of the lives of the prophets, from Hosea, the first after Moses according to our tradition, peace upon him, and the first who wrote down prophecies in a separate book, up to Maleachi, who was the last of the explaining and well-known prophets.”

<sup>36</sup> Krochmal 1961, 130. See on this also his remarks on his forthcoming book in the maskilic journal *Kerem hemed* 4 (1839), p. 275 (reprinted in: Krochmal 1961, 403): “In our writing (*Sha’are emuna tzerufa*) there will be found two chapters (i.e. chapters 9 and 10) containing words of Midrash and Haskala on the courses of time and its background etc., and in addition to that there will be a special chapter (*sha’ ar* 11), containing additional notes and explanations on all matters explained before.”

<sup>37</sup> This is not emphasized enough by Harris 1991, 160. He assumes that Krochmal’s interest in certain Biblical books is historiographical only: “Krochmal’s agenda demands studies of those books, and only those books, that can advance his historiographical agenda.” However, see also p. 163 f.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. on this Rawidowicz, Mavo, in Krochmal 1961, 126.

work of the divine will [literally “fingers”]<sup>39</sup> and special providence. And therefore, before Him, may He be praised, every letter and every character in [the Torah] is counted, numbered and laid down. Because everything happens in accordance with the will of His wisdom, and is written and copied in accordance with His providence, as handed down to us from the beginning.<sup>40</sup>

Ranak can, it is true, emphasize on another occasion that one does [not] “need to conceal or even deny the change in script from Old Hebrew to Assyrian that took place in Ezra’s time,”<sup>41</sup> which is why there are diverging vocalizations in some places in the Bible. However, one may not judge the Torah like “profane books.” Even the changes made to the text after the gift of the Torah did not take place by chance, but were carried out by prophets and intellectually gifted scribes.

Krochmal differentiates accordingly between the external form of the Torah and its content, and its “spirituality” [רויגחות]. Whereas the former can be changed by human hand, the latter is no longer subject to being capable of change and thus of historical criticism. From our contemporary point of view this may appear antiquated, yet in Krochmal’s time and environment precisely this insight meant an important step towards a reflected perception of history.<sup>42</sup>

By comparison, Krochmal can subject other Biblical books, which are to be ascribed neither to the Torah nor the *Nevi'im rishonim*, to a more thorough historical criticism, and thus, for example, establish with regard to the Book of Kohelet that Solomon could not possibly be its author. Rather “clear and well-known evidence spoke in favor of the contrary.”<sup>43</sup>

This kind of criticism becomes especially important also with respect to chapters 40 f. of the Book of Isaiah, because here, too, Ranak comes to the conclusion that they could not be by the prophet, even if he later moves away again somewhat from this position, which he had initially presented as being very reliable, by remarking that this contradicts “everything that had been known in the people from time immemorial, and, namely, not only in the Talmud and the Midrashim, but also in the works of Yosef, the priest [i.e. Josephus] in his book *Antiquitates*, who expressly ascribed these consolatory prophecies to Isaiah.”<sup>44</sup>

However, because such important scholars as Shmu’el David Luzzatto (d. 1865), who taught in Padua,<sup>45</sup> with whom he had conducted a detailed argument on this question by correspondence, rejected this opinion as inappropriate, he expressly refers in *More nevu'khe ha-zeman* to some of Ibn Ezra’s observations which seem to coincide in part with those of non-Jewish exegetes of more recent times. The second part of the Book of Isaiah could thus only be correctly understood if it were read as the source for the reconstruction of the intellectual revival in the period of the Second Temple.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>39</sup> On the expression “God’s finger” see Exod. 8:15, and see the commentaries on this particular verse in *Torat Hayyim. Hamisha humshe Tora*, Vol. 2.2, ed. M.L. Katzenellenbogen, Jerusalem 1987, p. 88 (in particular the short commentary of Ibn Ezra).

<sup>40</sup> Krochmal 1961, 199.

<sup>41</sup> Krochmal, *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> On the meaning of “spirit” in Krochmal’s perception of history see Turner 2005, 289–323.

<sup>43</sup> Krochmal 1961, 140.

<sup>44</sup> Krochmal 1961, 114.

<sup>45</sup> On him and his relationship with Krochmal see e.g. Margolies 1979, 103–106. See also Feiner 2004, 151 f.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. on this Harris 1991, 160.



As his most important argument for the existence of a “second” Isaiah he puts forward an observation on prophetic literature as a whole which seems to have been borrowed directly from Christian commentaries:

Because one of all the prophets’ stylistic devices is that, as a rule, their prophecies do not contain any details, apart from those referring to the not too distant future; however, with regard to the far distant days and conditions far in advance, their eyes foresee only general things for the future, nothing exactly determinable in time, and no specific actions or events, and even with regard to the names of persons and places, which they intimate [their prophecies remain vague]. The prophet stands, as his designation as “seer” implies, on the peak of a holy mountain and looks around in broad daylight, but the greater the distance becomes between his vantage point and that, what he is looking at, the more or less his prophecy lacks in clarity. As in the case of a human being who only sees general things on his horizon, without being able to distinguish and differentiate between individual things.<sup>47</sup>

Admittedly, in view of such argumentation, the impression could arise that Krochmal was disputing the Holy Scriptures’ divine inspiration in general. And this was apparently also one of Luzzatto’s reproaches against him. Therefore for Luzzatto, whose attitude, despite a non-fundamental aversion to the sciences, can be described as being conservative, Krochmal’s criticism went too far.<sup>48</sup> And this may, incidentally, also have had an influence on the somewhat lackluster history of Ranak’s reception. Be that as it may, against Luzzatto’s criticism Krochmal states that the prophets would not have been understood on principle if they were to have referred to a matter lying far in the future.<sup>49</sup> Why, indeed, did a prophet have to speak prophetically?

In the prophecies it is precisely not a matter of concrete individual events, but of general things which will come about in the future. Because how could Zachariah’s contemporaries have understood anything of the details whose coming to pass he would prophesy?<sup>50</sup> The prophecies are thus based on a general form, as Krochmal can then also state with regard to Moses’ song, Deut. 32, which he declares “to be the form and the model for all the prophetic accusations after it.”<sup>51</sup>

Therefore... everything [viz. all the prophecies] can be explained as being based on a general way of thinking and intellectual reflection; the song [viz. Deut. 32] does not, however, [itself] contain any recollections of any historical events in our history.

On account of these not undisputed insights, it was very important for Krochmal to reconcile his critical comments on individual Biblical records with tradition. Therefore, he does not only look for proof for his opinions in Ibn Ezra, Rashi and in the Ramban,<sup>52</sup> but also in the Talmud and Midrash. Thus he would like to find support for his opinion of the different time of the writing of the Torah in the Midrash from Sifre

<sup>47</sup> Krochmal 1961, 117.

<sup>48</sup> Luzzatto described his exegetical methodology in the foreword to his commentary to the Pentateuch, first edition Padua 1871, newly edited by P. Schlesinger, Jerusalem 1993, 11–22.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 118: “... therefore the words of the prophets, who were spoken in that time, were uttered in a totally different world, and therefore they are like an absolutely locked book. However, how could the people have understood only one word of these prophecies, if not all of them had been prophets? In this case, however, there would not have been the need for any prophet.”

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 132.

<sup>51</sup> Krochmal 1961, 117.

<sup>52</sup> For a full scale discussion of the reception of these medieval authors see the detailed introduction to my forthcoming translation of the *More nevukhe ha-zeman* into German.

Devarim 'Ekev 48,<sup>53</sup> placed at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> Gate as a motto, because: “just as Shafan arose in his time, thus Ezra in his, and Rabbi 'Aqiva in his.” According to this, the wise men of the rabbinical age already knew something of the truth behind the Biblical texts. However, they only passed this truth on “to the most virtuous among their pupils.”<sup>54</sup>

Krochmal thus starts out from the assumption that there are basically two truths: on the one hand, the truth which applies only for the pupils suitable for the same; and a second truth that was intended for “the broad mass of the people” and which had come down to us solely through tradition.<sup>55</sup> Only this construction, that was important for Krochmal, enabled him, as the protector of tradition, to simultaneously counter the polemic directed against him and, on the other hand, to adhere to a moderate Biblical criticism which could benefit his account of history. In addition, because there are indications of the correctness of the Biblical criticism in the Rabbinical writings, criticism of the Biblical texts cannot and should not be completely damned or completely dispensed with.<sup>56</sup>

With this differentiation between a basically “exoteric” tradition for the masses and an “esoteric” tradition for “suitable pupils,” Ranak, like his great model Maimonides, attempts to let the historiographical insights gained by him on the basis of critical considerations of the Bible appear as if they were based on tradition.<sup>57</sup> He tries to reconstruct and restore the original tradition that had been known to the rabbis, but has been lost in the meantime. In doing this, he proceeds occasionally in such a manner that he initially takes up the arguments of scholars from the most recent period, but then searches for indications for the correctness of these opinions in tradition. On the other hand, he does not accept traditions which contradict the historical truth, even if he does seem to attempt, again and again, to explain the obvious historical errors in tradition as being rationally comprehensible, and thus to protect and defend the cultivators of tradition, such as the teachers of the Talmud and medieval Bible commentators.<sup>58</sup> According to this, the correct measure of criticism exists when it proves possible to reconcile one tradition with the other, or, as he says with regard to the Book of Kohelet:

And indeed – may glory be bestowed on our early wise in eternity [cf. Proverbia 3:35]! – after the book had already once been included among the Ketuvim, they endeavored to interpret it in such a manner that the younger scholars could and would no longer cast it out of its place. May the benedictions also be bestowed on the first among the literal exegetes, among them, in particular, Rabbi M[oshe] ben Menahem [Mendelssohn], of blessed memory, who strove so very much to interpret it in such a manner that it would not contradict the true faith. However, each [of these exegetes] said learned things in his way, and the researcher's understanding was based on them, and while doing so their heart got along with [their understanding]. But was this in fact the book's intention and purpose? Earlier generations did not ask themselves this question; however, on account of the research [in] the present time, we find ourselves compelled to answer it. We must therefore once again repeat and say that just as

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Sifre ad Deuteronomium*, ed. L. Finkelstein, Berlin 1939 (reprint New York 1969), 112 (Hebrew).

<sup>54</sup> Krochmal 1961, 157.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Rawidowicz, Mavo, in Krochmal 1961, 130; Weissblueth 1981, 16.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 130, where he refers to Kohelet Rabba 12:12 [31b] and Yerushalmi helek [ySan 10,1 (28a)]. These texts are proof that “the book of Kohelet was the last one of the accepted writings [of the Bible].”

<sup>57</sup> Cf. on this Harris 1991, 177, who is alluding here to Rawidowicz, Mavo.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Krochmal 1961, 143.

there was the danger in preceding generations of opening the concealed, there is [also] the danger in our generation of concealing what has already been made public by other [researchers/scholars], which would be completely futile and very detrimental, and would not have any justification whatsoever. The true help consists, however, in researching further and seeking, namely by means of an object that serves the divine truth, of which it is true that it does not leave those who seek it. Happy are we, and how great is our interest, that the Lord gave us His Torah, according to which one does not need to fear research and examination in accordance with any manner?<sup>59</sup>

Historically, Krochmal thus does not assume the Biblical book to have been “given by Sinai,” but only its message, its content; the latter can – we might imagine quite idealistically – no longer be questioned. However, despite all the misunderstandings which could arise as a result, the objective is to further research and seek in order to press forward to the relevant statements and teachings with respect to the spirit of a sentence or book of the Bible.

## Conclusion

As explained, it is understandable that Krochmal’s biblical critical comments and observations do not contain very much “original material” to still concern present-day Jewish Biblical exegesis, as cultivated in Israel or the USA. Krochmal’s dealings with the Biblical text are also not to be explained as an independent attempt at a critical exegesis, but initially as a reaction to the challenges of the predominant opinions of his time, above all among non-Jewish exegetes and historians. Contemporary German biblical scholarship, in particular, had set standards which could not be ignored by Krochmal, as this would only have led to further errors and confusion with regard to the historical backgrounds and “conformity with the law” of Jewish history and its cycles. Krochmal’s biblical critical studies serve, in so far, primarily historical philosophical contemplation, but they do reveal the relevance of the linking of tradition and “enlightened” scholarship. He saw this as having been prepared, for instance, in the work of the medieval exegete Ibn Ezra. However, he goes one step further than the latter, by taking up the historical and philosophical findings of his time and incorporating them into a complete model of Jewish history. He thus succeeded in what has been demanded, in particular by some Israeli researchers, with regard to modern Biblical scholarship, namely to pay attention to a greater relatedness of “Biblical Study” and “Jewish Thought” in order thus to question the claim raised in particular by Protestant exegesis to the historical and religious historical work on the “Old Testament.”

As already stated, what was fundamental for Krochmal was the conviction gained in the dispute with the medieval sources that all the biblical critical insights pointed out by modern research were already known to the rabbis in Talmudic times, although they could not or would not say so openly. Although the rabbis, for example, always maintained that the Book of Kohelet had been written by Solomon, according to Krochmal there are sufficient indications that they did in fact know that this could not be the case. Even if some of the reasons given for this alleged knowledge of the rabbis appear very far-fetched from today’s point of view, they do indicate Krochmal’s true

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<sup>59</sup> Krochmal 1961, 143 f.

intention: the rabbis representing the tradition, who according to Krochmal were best versed in the Biblical text, basically already knew exactly what German-speaking scholars later found out. However, the rabbis could not yet impart this knowledge to the people, the broad masses, of their time. The revelation of this to a certain extent esoteric or elite knowledge to the broad masses of readers with a good knowledge of Hebrew is thus the real concern which Krochmal pursued in his biblical critical observations and conclusions serving historiosophy.<sup>60</sup>

In this, Krochmal's access to the Bible already clearly differs from that of Maimonides, who always started out from the assumption that his findings were really only accessible to a small group of intelligent persons. Ranak's idealistic Biblical criticism thus proves itself to be a further indication of his philosophy of intellectual revival directed towards the whole people, which fell on such fertile ground, in particular in the cultural Zionist circles in Eastern Europe, for instance in the case of Ahad ha-'Am (alias Asher Ginsburg) (1856–1927) and Nachman Bialik (1873–1934), and later also in Berlin and in the United States, for instance in the case of Simon Rawidowicz.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Harris 1991, 189–191.

<sup>61</sup> See on this my article: Lehnardt 2009, forthcoming.

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Elvira Grözinger

## THE SOCIALIST HERO OF THE STATE THEATERS IN POLAND AND ROMANIA?

### A Chapter in the History of Yiddish Theater, in Memory of Abraham Goldfaden (1840–1908)

When visitors come today to the Jewish Theater in Warsaw, which is named after Estera Rachel and Ida Kamińska, they are not aware of the fact that this institution is actually the fruit of the efforts of one man, i.e. Abraham Goldfaden, who founded the first professional Yiddish theater in the Romanian town of Jassy in 1876. The renowned Yiddish playwright, considered to be both the “father of the Yiddish theater” and the founder of Yiddish opera, may nowadays “be the most influential Jewish artist you’ve never heard of,” as Joel Berkowitz suggests.<sup>1</sup> This Warsaw Theater, now a remnant of Polish-Jewish theatrical culture which flourished before the Shoah, was revived after the Second World War as a State Jewish Theater. Since the fall of the Communist regime it is being financed by other Polish cultural authorities. One of its partners was for many years the State Jewish Theater of Bucharest, which also tried “to spin the golden thread” of Jewish tradition, especially under its longtime literary secretary and chief dramatic advisor from 1955 to 1982, Israil Bercovici (1921–1988).<sup>2</sup> Bercovici was assisted in these efforts by his friend and colleague, the Polish stage director and painter Jakub Rotbaum (1901–1994). Both were lifelong disciples and fans of Goldfaden. He was accepted – like Sholem Aleykhem – by the Communist authorities as “politically and ideologically correct,” especially after Alexander Granovsky, with the help of Yehezkiel Dobrushin and Moshe Litvakov, staged Goldfaden’s operetta *The Sorceress* at the Moscow State Yiddish Theater (GOSET) in 1922 and therewith launched a new modernist and ideological aesthetics for the Yiddish theater.<sup>3</sup> By interpreting Goldfaden in the socialist manner, they were able to put him on stage in the rare periods of favorable conditions for Jewish culture as well as in times of political oppression.<sup>4</sup> Abraham Goldfaden died in 1908, a century ago,

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<sup>1</sup> Berkowitz 2004, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Grözinger 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the politization of theaters in the Soviet Union, see the excellent study by Veidlinger 2000. Berkowitz (2004, 16), is right in calling it “Reinventing Goldfaden.”

<sup>4</sup> The writer Uri Finkel (1896–1957), son of the last rabbi of Rakov and member of the Belarus Institute of Culture, which was later renamed as “The Institute of Jewish Proletarian Culture in the Belarus SSR,” had for instance published an article on *Sotsyale figurn in Goldfadns verk* [Social Figures in Goldfaden’s Oeuvre], in *Tsaytshrift* 1 (Minsk 1926) and in the same year edited together with Nahum Auslaender (Nokhem Oyslender) a collection of articles on the biography of Goldfaden (*A. Goldfadn: materyaln far*

and in spite of the fact that the majority of today's general Jewish audience lacks knowledge of the Yiddish which was the chosen language of Goldfaden's oeuvre, and although the glorious days of the Yiddish stage are over, his heritage is still kept alive.

### Abraham Goldfaden's life and oeuvre

Goldfaden was born as Avrom Goldenfodim (or Goldenfodem) in the Volhynian town of Starokonstantinov, at the time Russia, on July 24, 1840, the son of a watchmaker. Like all Jewish boys in the Ukraine at that time he spoke Yiddish at home and attended a Jewish religious elementary school (*kheyder*), where he also learned Hebrew. However, as his family was affected by the spirit of the Jewish Enlightenment, the *Haskalah*, he was lucky to get a private tutorship in Russian and German, too. There was no Jewish professional stage at that time; the only theatrical activities were the carnival Purim-Shpils, performed in private homes and confined circles on the yearly festival of Purim. Goldfaden's talent as a comedian manifested itself quite early in his childhood, as he is said to have often imitated the Jewish wedding entertainers (*badkhonim* or *marshaliks*) and the "Broder singers,"<sup>5</sup> i.e. the folk singers so popular among the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe. He then attended a Russian school, thus avoiding the 25-year compulsory military service in the Czarist army, and continued to study at the government-run higher rabbinical school in Żytomierz (1857–1866), from which he graduated as a teacher. He never became a rabbi, though.

This might have been due to the fact that one of his teachers at Żytomierz was Abraham Baer Gottlober, one of the foremost Neo-Hebrew poets (1811–1899) and a declared disciple of the *Haskalah*. Gottlober supported and promoted the literary talent of his student, whereas through the headmaster of the school, another *maskil* (enlightener), H.S. Slonimsky, or rather Slonimsky's wife, Goldfaden became acquainted with the Yiddish comedy *Serkele* by the Warsaw-born writer Shloyme Ettinger (approx. 1800/1803–1855/1856). In 1862 Goldfaden published his first Hebrew poems in the then leading Hebrew and Yiddish periodicals of the Russian *Haskalah*-movement, *Hamelits* and *Kol mevasser*, and in 1885 his first book of Hebrew poetry *Zizim u-Ferahim*, which indicates his knowledge of traditional Jewish literature.<sup>6</sup> Since his earliest collection of Yiddish lyrics under the title *Dos Yiddele* (The Little Jew) which was published in 1866, followed in 1869 by the book, *Di yidene* (The

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*a biografye*), cf. *The Concise Jewish Encyclopedia* (in Russian) vol. 9, 176–177. See also Berkowitz/Dauber 2006, 41 or Berkowitz 2003, 194–195.

<sup>5</sup> Berkowitz 2004, 12.

<sup>6</sup> S. *Babylonian Talmud*, Tract Sabbath, translated by Michael L. Rodkinson, Book 1 (Vols. I and II), [1903], Vol. II, Ch. XXII, p. 332: R. Joseph taught: It is written [Isaiah xxvii. 6]: "In the future shall Jacob yet take root: Israel shall bud and blossom; and shall fill the face of the world with fruit." "What is meant by "bud and blossom?" The scholars of Babylon, who wind blossoms and wreaths around the Thorah." See also Jakob Emden (1697–1776), Rabbi and Kabbalist from Hamburg–Altona and enemy of Rabbi Jonathan Eybeschuetz from Krakow (1690–1764) whom he denounced for Sabbatianism. Later in life, Emden became more liberal and corresponded with the initiator of the Jewish Enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn. He published a lexicon of Kabbalist symbols, *Zizim u-Ferahim*, Altona 1768, cf. Scholem 2006, 9, note 25.

Jewess), including poetry, a sketch and a three-act comedy, *Di mume Sosye* (Aunt Sosye), he has had a reputation as a Yiddish songwriter and dramatist, the creator of the Yiddish operetta. These early lyrics “caught the popular fancy and were used by folksingers to enrich their repertoire,”<sup>7</sup> and many of them are today considered to be a part of Jewish folklore, as frequent recordings show.<sup>8</sup> This was the beginning of Goldfaden’s astounding career, ending up as an internationally famous songwriter and playwright, author of approximately 60 plays.<sup>9</sup> It was probably Gottlober, too, the author of comedies *Der dektukh* (The Bridal Canopy or Two Weddings in One Night), who taught Goldfaden how to use “satirical dialogue as a vehicle of popular enlightenment.”<sup>10</sup> This, besides his decisive encounter with the art of the “Broder Singers”<sup>11</sup> – Velvl Zbarzher in Czernowitz, and especially Israel Grodner, a Yiddish cabaret artist, in Jassy – accounts for Goldfaden’s soon becoming a leading figure in Yiddish theater.

Before he dedicated his life to the stage, though, Goldfaden worked at first as a teacher in Simferopol (1867–1868), from where he moved to Odessa, trying unsuccessfully to make a living from commerce (with a ladies’ hat business) for several years, but he seemingly had no talent for business at all. He edited several short-lived Yiddish journals, for example in 1875 together with his friend, the writer Yitskhok Yoel Linetsky, a humorous magazine, *Der alter yisrolik*, which was banned by the Czarist authorities. This caused Goldfaden to move to Romania in 1876, originally in order to establish another Yiddish newspaper there, but instead a new era began for him and Yiddish culture when the modern Yiddish theater took shape under his guidance. In spite of three different versions concerning the birth of this institution, it is an established fact that Goldfaden did succeed in his endeavor, and dedicated the rest of his life to writing and producing Yiddish plays.<sup>12</sup>

In his life, he experienced good and bad luck which took him to many places, at first towns in his home country Russia (including the Ukraine). But he did not stay for long either in Munich or in Vienna, where he made an unsuccessful attempt to study medicine. Goldfaden was at home nowhere, but his career and fame as the founder of the modern Yiddish theater was closely tied to Romania. Compared to Czarist Russia there was more freedom and less oppression in Romania, the warm summer weather was better for open-air performances – all this suited Goldfaden at the time. Jassy (Iași), where he arrived in 1876, has since been called the “cradle of the Yiddish theater,” and jealously holds on to the title even today,<sup>13</sup> though some theater historians

<sup>7</sup> Liptzin 1963, 35.

<sup>8</sup> One of his most famous songs, the lullaby “Rozhinkes mit mandlen,” is a timeless classic.

<sup>9</sup> P. Hartnoll and P. Found, Abraham Goldfaden, in *The Concise Oxford Companion to the Theatre*, Oxford 1996, maintain that he even wrote nearly 400 of them – which is wrong, of course.

<sup>10</sup> Liptzin 1963, 35.

<sup>11</sup> They were founded by Berl Margulis, better known as Berl Broder (from the Galician town of Brody, 1815–1868). Broder’s troupe travelled from Galicia and Hungary to Romania, where it performed Yiddish folk songs – among them Goldfaden’s own poems, in the tradition of the Jewish troubadours and the *bakdhonim*. One of the most famous singers was Eliakum Zunser or Eliakim Badkhen (1836–1913), who in turn was influenced by Velvl Zbarzher, (1824–1884), born as Benjamin Wolf Ehrenkrantz. In 1876, Goldfaden wrote a two-act play for them, and its performance by the Broder Singers in the wine cellar “Pomul Verde” in Jassy was the cradle of the Yiddish theater.

<sup>12</sup> Sandrow 1977, 40.

<sup>13</sup> Nowadays an International Drama Festival, “Avram Goldfaden,” takes place there.



have contested it and preferred Warsaw as the birthplace.<sup>14</sup> Goldfaden's career was positively affected by the Crimean War (or the Russian-Turkish War 1877–1878) which led to Romania's independence and to the temporary influx of a large prospective Jewish audience. Apart from Jassy, where Goldfaden established his troupe, he stayed for a while in, among other places, Botoșani, Galați, Braïla and repeatedly Bucharest, where he became the director of the Jignița-Theater in 1892. In the meantime he began to sympathize with the ideas of the upcoming socialism and also Zionism (Hovevey Zion),<sup>15</sup> but the political and social ferments in Romania, coupled with economic crisis as well as rising anti-Semitism, caused Goldfaden in 1896 also to leave for good this country where he had spent his most creative and successful years, twenty years after he had first arrived there to make his way.

He did not stop traveling like a "wandering star," when his musical plays were later performed by a singing and acting troupe. At first it was just as a little company, playing in the style of the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, with which he toured cities in Romania and Russia, until the Russian authorities banned Yiddish theater in 1883. The rise of anti-Semitism and pogroms in the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the assassination of Czar Alexander II, led to the first big wave of emigration of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe, primarily to the United States of America. Goldfaden, too, continued to roam and wander. In his plays he often depicted the Jewish world of his time, which was familiar to his audience. His dramatic works were of a different quality, most of them not being considered as profound literature, and Goldfaden himself did not maintain this to be the case. He justified the low literary level, however, by arguing that his audience, at least in the early years, could not have absorbed by any more sophisticated material than he had given them. But the best of his plays are touching, stirring, lyrical and comical, as Nahma Sandrow stresses.<sup>16</sup> They were of different genres with a wide range of topics, starting from the classical maskilic intents, like the amusing fight against religious fanaticism and arranged marriages in *Di tsvey Kuni Lemls* (The Two Kuni-Lemls, first performed 1880), depicting Biblical figures (like in the stage hit *Sulamith*<sup>17</sup>) and historical events from Jewish history, later conveying criticism of the Haskalah after the pogroms, as in the drama about the Bar-Kokhba-revolt (1882) or in *Moshiyakhs Tsaytn* (The Messianic Times, 1887). These plays reflected Goldfaden's education in both traditional Jewish and worldly European culture, his enlightened position, and his part-time sympathies for socialist and Zionist ideas.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> e.g. Turkov-Grudberg 1956; Bercovici 1976, 27 f., quoting Shloyme Mikhoels' article in *Emes*, December 1946, who refers to an article from the *Allgemeine Preussische Staatszeitung* (No. 341, 6. Dekabr 1838), about an actual debate which then took place in Warsaw concerning the possibility of founding a stage for performing plays in Yiddish.

<sup>15</sup> See the review by Miriam Kachanski of a dissertation entitled *Khibat-Tsion and Yiddish: the Multidimensional Encounter Between Movement, Language and Culture*, in: S. Luria, H. Bar-Ytzhak (eds.), *Khulyot, Journal of Yiddish Research*, No. 8, winter 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Sandrow 1977, 45 f.

<sup>17</sup> Anonym: [Budapest; Oper "Sulamith" von Goldfaden]. – In *Die Welt*, Vol. 4 (1900) Nr 1, 23: "Die Goldfaden'sche Oper "Sulamith" erweist sich im Budapester Kisfaludy-Theater als Zug- und Cassenstück ersten Ranges. Samstag den 12. D. M. wurde sie bei total ausverkauftem Haus zum fünfzigstenmale gegeben."

<sup>18</sup> Goldfaden was also a delegate to the World Zionist Congress in London in 1900.

Goldfaden is said to have been particularly good at explaining to the actors the inner motivation of their roles, and, as the actor Kalman Juvelier from Lemberg relates, “Scenic imagination he also had in plenty, and in spite of the limited means at hand, the father of the Yiddish theater was often able to achieve remarkable effects.”<sup>19</sup> He briefly put together another unsuccessful theater company in 1886 in Warsaw, and in 1887 he went to New York for the first time. But others were settled already there – Joseph Lateiner (1853–1935), and Moishe Hurvitz (1844–1910), old acquaintances and rivals from Jassy, who had left Goldfaden’s troupe, and, being both gifted *shund* writers, kissed by the lightly draped muse, produced commercially successful rather vulgar comedy and satire. The disappointed Goldfaden, having failed in establishing a new successful troupe, left in 1889 for London and traveled again for another fifteen years from one European city to another. His plays continued to be performed in Europe and America, but his health was worsening and he had money problems. After selling all his possessions, he again left for New York in 1904.

In America, he made another short attempt at journalism as editor of the *New Yorker Yidishe Ilustrirte Tsaytung* and wrote a Hebrew-language play called *David bamlkhama* (David at War), which was performed in March 1906, the first play in this language to be performed in America, and was staged repeatedly, drawing large audiences. His last attempt, with *Ben Ami*, a play based on George Eliot’s novel *Daniel Deronda* performed at Boris Tomashevsky’s People’s Theater in New York on December 25, 1907, was finally an enormous success. But it came too late, as Goldfaden survived this triumph by a few days only. After his death on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 1908, the obituary in the *New York Times* called him “the Yiddish Shakespeare” and “both a poet and a prophet.” His funeral procession to the Washington Cemetery in Brooklyn was attended by 75,000 mourners.<sup>20</sup>

Goldfaden, even in being a showman, followed the tradition of the Haskalah and constructed his plays as didactic instruments, thus introducing his spectators both to the new genre of drama and to the ideas of the Enlightenment: “Since I have a stage at my disposal, let it be a school for you. You who had no chance to study during your youth, come to me to see the faithful pictures I will draw you of life... as in a mirror... you will take a lesson from it and improve by yourselves the errors which you make in family life, and among Jews, and between Jews and their Christian neighbors. While you are having your good laugh and are being entertained by my funny jokes, at that very moment my heart is weeping, looking at you.”<sup>21</sup> And indeed, after the play he often came out to the stage again, in order to explain the play to his spectators. Goldfaden could thus have served as an ideal figure at the time when it was necessary to transform the traditional Jew into a new human being, i.e. a socialist, in the communist societies of post-War II Eastern Europe by all means, also by means of culture.

<sup>19</sup> Rosenfeld 1977, 242.

<sup>20</sup> According to the article 75,000 at Poet’s Funeral, *New York Times*, January 11, 1908, 1, whereas Joel Berkowitz writes that “more than 100,000 people attended his funeral,” cf. Berkowitz 2003.

<sup>21</sup> Sandrow 1977, 46–48.

## Goldfaden on the Bucharest stage

No wonder that someone like Israil Bercovici (1921–1988), the Botoșani-born shtetl-Jew son of a poor tailor, who survived the Shoah as a young man and, becoming an active communist, was able to complete high school and study at the Mihai Eminescu Literature Academy,<sup>22</sup> felt a deep bond between Goldfaden's program and his own work for the Yiddish stage at the State Jewish Theater in Bucharest. Apart from the fact that Goldfaden was "the father of the Yiddish theater," as is written on his tombstone, and that he founded it in Romania, there were many other reasons for Bercovici to keep Goldfaden's legacy, and seek as well as safeguard the continuity of what he called the "spinning of the golden thread" – "der hemshekh fun goldenem fodem," which he formulated in an article in *Fraie Shtime* (undated).

Bercovici paid tribute to Goldfaden in his monumental history of the Jewish /Yiddish theater in Romania, *Hundert yor yidish teater in Rumenyne 1876–1976*, published in Yiddish by the Criterion Publishing Company in Bucharest in 1976 and followed by his Romanian translation *O sută de ani de teatru evreiesc în România* ("One hundred years of Yiddish/Jewish theater in Romania") in 1982,<sup>23</sup> but not only in these places. Also in his earlier historical essay *Akhtsik yor yidish teater in Rumenyne 1876–1956*, Bercovici's ideas about the function and purpose of theater both to educate and to entertain followed the steps of Avrom Goldfaden. Moreover, Bercovici wrote his own Yiddish-language plays, including *Der goldener fodem* ("The Golden Thread", 1963) about Goldfaden, though it was only much later performed, and in 1970 he wrote an article on "Avrom Goldfadn un zayn muzik" for the *Tsaytshrift*, the Yiddish part of the official organ of the Jewish Communities of Romania.<sup>24</sup> The Romanian translation of this article followed in the Romanian edition of the journal *Revista Cultului Mozaic din R.P.R.*

But despite the fact that Goldfaden was generally recognized as a founding pillar of the modern professional Jewish Theater, and was seen by many as a prophet, a revolutionary as well as a teacher of the masses, as Bercovici stresses in his book on the centenary of the Yiddish Theater in Romania,<sup>25</sup> his works were not frequently performed on the Bucharest stage. In Bercovici's chronicle of the plays staged there after the Second World War, i.e. from 1947/1948 to 1976, he lists merely the following few performances:

1948: *Di tsvey Kuni-Leml*, put on stage by Moshe Rubinger; Music by Khayim Shvartsman; Choreography by Kora Benador;

1951: *Di Kishef-makheren* [sic!], staged by B. Lebli and D. Kenig;

<sup>22</sup> Grözinger 2002.

<sup>23</sup> The second Romanian-language edition of this book, published in 1998 by the Editura Integral, Editurile Universala, Bucharest, was revised and enlarged by Constantin Măciucă. In this paper I quote Bercovici's first Yiddish edition of 1976 as the authentic document of his ideological and historical standing during his lifetime. Another authentic and ambitious document of I. Bercovici's view of the history of the Jewish theater in the world is his unfinished book manuscript of approximately 600 pages, where he again extensively quotes his already published chapters on the history of the Jewish theater in Romania and on Goldfaden. I therefore refer to the original edition.

<sup>24</sup> The Yiddish article appeared on July 15, 1970 and the Romanian two weeks later, on August 1.

<sup>25</sup> Bercovici (1976, 15) quotes Y. Shatzki's article on Goldfaden and His Theater, *Tsukunft* 1916 (or 1926?), 26. 32.

1953: *Dos freylekhe shusterl* (*Ni-be-ni-me-ni-kukurigu* [sic!]),<sup>26</sup> staged by B. Lebli;  
 1956: *A Goldfaden-Kholem* by Jakub Rotbaum after Itzik Manger, a guest performance from Poland on the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the founding of Yiddish theater;

1957: *Di Khishefmakherin. Operete in 5 Akten (8 bilder)* [sic!], staged by Izo Shapira;

1958: *Di komedyantn* by Sholem Aleykhem, music by A. Goldfaden and B. Segal, staged by Beno Popliker;

1959: *Di Kishefmakherin. Operete in 5 aktn fun Avrom Goldfaden*, Romanian version by I. Kara, staged by Izo Shapira. For years to follow, Goldfaden was absent from the Bucharest stage and no one made any attempt to reinterpret him in the sense of socialist realism. Only in 1976, a jubilee again, was Israil Bercovici's homage to Goldfaden, *Der goldener fodem* (The Golden Thread) staged in Bucharest.

This chronicle yields rather poor results from Goldfaden's legacy in the Bucharest Jewish State Theater. What were the reasons for this evident discrepancy between Bercovici's private admiration for Goldfaden, the Romanian-Jewish theater's claim to "hereditary" succession and the reality of the almost Goldfaden-less Bucharest repertory? We do not know. The reason could be that Goldfaden was seen by other Romanian cultural authorities with different eyes from those of Israil Bercovici, and the old pre-World War II controversy about whether his plays were a contribution to the ideals of the socialist revolution must still or again have been virulent in Bucharest, too. We should not forget that many of Goldfaden's plays were often criticized and bear in mind that some critics even called them *shund*, almost a verdict of death for a playwright, a dramatic Olympian, so to speak, whose place was, as Bercovici claimed for him, in the "temple of arts" forever.

## Goldfaden on the Polish Stage

Let us now take a parallel look at Goldfaden's adoption in post-war Poland. As I have mentioned, Jakub Rotbaum, since his youth one of the most ardent torchbearers among Goldfaden's disciples, was a friend, colleague and guest of Israil Bercovici in Bucharest. Rotbaum, born in Żelechów in the Lublin area as a son of a rabbi, attended grammar school in Warsaw. But he did not continue the family tradition, and chose the fine arts as his profession.<sup>27</sup> From 1918 to 1921 he attended the Warsaw School of Decorative Arts, and in 1922 he was a student of the School of Fine Arts there and studied at the same time at the first Polish Film Academy. In 1923 he went to Berlin to study painting and met with the Vakhtangov Theater.<sup>28</sup> In 1926 Rotbaum was back in

<sup>26</sup> Bercovici (1976, 99), writes the title of the play differently: "Ni be, ni me, ni kukuriku" or "Shuster-yung als farshtelter rebbe." In Odessa, where Goldfaden staged it in 1879, he clothed the figures which had "peyes" and "kapotes", something that was strange for the public, because they seldom saw such Jews in the streets.

<sup>27</sup> The biographical details are based on Hannowa 1995.

<sup>28</sup> This theater was named after Evgeny Bagrationovich Vakhtangov (1883–1922), a renowned Russian-Armenian director, student of the famous Constantin Stanislavski (1863–1938, actor, director and founder of the Moscow Artists Theater (MChAT). Vakhtangov was also influenced by the theatrical style of

Warsaw, where he directed his first performance of Rabindranath Tagore's *Post*, and plays in Yiddish followed. In 1927 he produced a film on Jewish folklore, and, after his examination in film-directing in 1928 he took up drama studies in Moscow under the leading figures of the Soviet theater Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and Mikhoels.<sup>29</sup> In 1930 Rotbaum became the artistic director of the famous Jewish theater modeled after Stanislavsky, "The Vilnius Troupe,"<sup>30</sup> where he staged Goldfaden's *Kishef makherin* (The Sorceress, after Itzik Manger). In 1938 he left Poland for Paris, where he directed the P.I.A.T. Avant-garde Theater, and one year later left for New York, together with the Polish poet Julian Tuwim. There he worked at the Jewish Art Theater headed by Morris Schwartz and again produced Goldfaden, apart from Shalom Asz, Sholem Aleykhem and H. Leiwick. In the years 1942–1948 he directed in New York, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, London, Paris and Israel.

Whereas Tuwim returned to Poland as early as 1946,<sup>31</sup> Rotbaum decided to follow when Ida Kamińska, the grand dame of the Polish-Jewish theater,<sup>32</sup> invited him to return in 1949. He gave up American citizenship and enthusiastically proceeded to

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Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940); he developed e.g. the so-called constructivist theater, puppet theater and physical theater, using also oriental forms. Among Vakhtangov's productions the best known are that of *Turandot* by Carlo Gozzi and *The Dybbuk* by S. An-Sky with the Habimah theater company.

<sup>29</sup> Solomon (Shloyme) Mikhoels (1890–1948), a Soviet Jewish actor and the artistic director of the Moscow State Jewish Theater. During the Second World War, Mikhoels served as the chairman of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee and, like most of its members, he was murdered on the orders of Stalin.

<sup>30</sup> The Vilnius Troupe (in Yiddish: Vilner) was founded during the First World War, in the Lithuanian town of Vilna in 1916, as a Yiddish art theater. Already during its first tour of Europe at the beginning of the 1920s, starting from Warsaw, it became famous with its production of S. An-Sky's play *The Dybbuk* and belonged, like the Hebrew Theater Habimah, to the most prestigious Jewish theater ensembles in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After the tour the ensemble split up in 1925, some of the members remained in Western Europe or went to the USA. The others returned to Warsaw, where they continued to work under this name until the troupe dissolved in 1934, seemingly for economic reasons as unemployment was growing in Poland at this time. Cf. M. Kanfer, *Czy Epitafium dla Trupy Wileńskiej*, *Nowy Dziennik* 1935, No. 68, 7, in: J. Michalik, E. Prokop-Janiec (eds.), *Teatr Żydowski w Krakowie. Studia i Materiały*, Kraków 1995, 193 f.

<sup>31</sup> Grözinger 2003, 583–584.

<sup>32</sup> The great Yiddish actress, Ida Kamińska (1899–1980), was born into an actors' dynasty, the daughter of Esther-Rachel Kamińska. She determined the Yiddish theater beginning in interwar Poland, where she co-founded the Warsaw Yiddish Art Theater (WIKT), and continuing during World War II in Soviet territories. After the war, she returned to Poland in 1945 and founded the State Jewish Theater with official support in Wrocław. In the epilogue to his biography of Ida Kamińska's mother, *Di mame Ester Rokhl* (The mother Esther Rachel, Farlag Yidish Bukh, Warsaw 1953, 285) Itskhok Turkov-Grundberg wrote accordingly in 1956: "The first Jewish theater building which has been erected in liberated Poland, in the old Polish city of Wrocław, which has returned to its home country, has received the name of Esther-Rachel Kamińska. Every new success of the Jewish State Theater is a further perpetuation of her name." In 1968, due to the anti-Semitic campaign, Kamińska and her (second) husband Meir Melman left Poland for Israel. Szymon Szurmiej, her successor as the director of the State Theater, criticized this step publically as a "big mistake." In Israel she did not find the success she had hoped for, and so she traveled between Israel and the US. Ida Kamińska died of heart disease in New York in 1980, two years after her husband. Henryk Grynberg, the famous Polish-born writer who survived the Holocaust, was an actor at the Jewish State Theater from 1958 to 1967. He did not return to Poland after a guest performance on Broadway and lives until today in the USA. Grynberg, whom Szurmiej's jubilee publication does not mention, calls Ida Kamińska in his memoir "Our Jewish Queen," cf. YIVO Catalogue of the exhibition "Ida Kamiński (1899–1980), di granddame funem yidishn teater." Less than a year later Ida Kamińska followed him into exile. See also Kuligowska-Korzeniowska 2006.

build up the “new Polish society in peace and socialism,” just as Bercovici did in post-war Romania. As Stalinization progressed, between 1947 and 1950, the Jewish cultural life that was being reborn was subject to communist ideology. Upon his return in 1949, Rotbaum became the artistic director of the Lower Silesian Jewish Theater in Wrocław (until 1952), headed by Ida Kamińska.<sup>33</sup> His productions there included, of course, *A Goldfaden Dream*, a play staged as soon as 1937 (under the title *The Miracle Worker*).<sup>34</sup> In 1950 this was also staged by him at the State Jewish Theater, and shown on a tour in Warsaw. It was interpreted in the Marxist sense of a “class conflict,” and therefore very positively reviewed in the newspaper *Słowo Polskie* (Polish Word):

*A Goldfaden Dream* does not idealize Hotsmakh, a small *luftmentsh*, but nevertheless this is his rehabilitation. For the first time, perhaps we look at Hotsmakh in a proper way: as a victim of the capitalist regime and of racial prejudices, a poor, overworked Jew, whose family obligations and the social conditions of that time require him to search for solutions in questionable transactions [...] [T]housands of such Hotsmakhs died in Treblinka during the [Nazi] occupation with the mark of social vampire issued by the Hitlerite fascists. And it is just for this reason that *A Goldfaden Dream* showed us the true nature of Hotsmakh and his brothers; this play should be seen by the broadest possible masses of Polish society. And above all by workers of factories and production plants in Wrocław.<sup>35</sup>

Most of the Jewish theater groups in Poland were then dissolved by the Stalinists. The other large Jewish theater in post-war Poland, in Łódź, had to merge with that of Wrocław, and so the only one to survive was the E.R. Kamińska State Jewish Theater, based in Warsaw since 1955, as the authorities probably did not dare to close this one, too. In 1952, Rotbaum became the artistic director of the Teatr Polski (Polish Theater) in Wrocław, and staged international dramatists in the repertory rather than Jewish or Yiddish ones. He was granted many awards and distinctions. In 1968, due to the anti-Semitic climate in Poland, he had to leave the theater. As for Ida Kamińska and so many other patriotic Polish Jews, this was a deep shock for him. From then onwards he never worked for any Polish theater again, and his productions in many European countries as well as in North and South America were exclusively of Jewish plays. He continued to live in Wrocław, sharing an apartment in the proximity of the old synagogue with his sister Lia. Jakub Rotbaum died in 1994.

In 1975, the Jewish State Theater, by then headed by Szymon Szurmiej, celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, and an album with essays on the history and repertory, among them by Jakub Rotbaum, was published on this occasion.<sup>36</sup> Rotbaum’s text is similar to Israil Bercovici’s in its praise of his country, applauding the good conditions under which the theater was able to work, etc. As we know, it moved from Wrocław to Warsaw in 1955. Whereas the first play to be staged in Łódź in 1946 was Jakob Gordin’s<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> In the immediate post-war years, 90,000 Jews lived in Lower Silesia, mostly in big cities. See Woźniczka 2004, 31.

<sup>34</sup> See Lifson 1965, 238 f. The Polish critics considered this production as most remarkable.

<sup>35</sup> H. Muszyńska Hoffmanowa, *Wieczory teatralne*. “Sen o Goldfadenie” w Państwowym Teatrze Żydowskim, *Słowo Polskie* 1950, No. 61 (1189), 3, quoted in Bułat 2008, 65.

<sup>36</sup> *25 lat Państwowego Teatru Żydowskiego w Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej* [25 Years of the State Jewish Theater in the People’s Republic of Poland], Warszawa 1975. As D. Ginsberg writes there (p. 8) that since 1949 money had been collected for its erection in Wrocław.

<sup>37</sup> Jakob or Yankev Gordin (1853–1909), born in the Ukraine, arrived in the USA in 1892 and is considered as the first classical playwright and a reformer of the Yiddish theater by those who name

*Kreutzer Sonata*, and not a play by Goldfaden, Rotbaum's production of *A Goldfaden Dream* in 1950 was the first production in the newly founded State Jewish Theater, but it was a tribute to Goldfaden, based on texts by Itzik Manger, Gershon Aynbinder and others, and not Goldfaden's own play. Rotbaum's *A Goldfaden Dream* was a great success and has become legendary, being a mixture of dance, humor and song. It is maintained that Rotbaum's later versions of *A Goldfaden Dream* never reached the level of the first one, but it was performed over 400 times and was a recent part of the Goldfaden Centennial repertoire in Jassy in 2008. Rotbaum, too, had meant it to be a didactic play, introducing the values of Jewish folklore to the masses. It was praised by critics as an artistic revelation, playing on the border between dream and reality, partly exotic and partly a poetically nostalgic beautiful vision of things past, of the old Jewish world now destroyed.

It was Yankev Gordin, though, who was more regularly put on the Polish-Yiddish stage (*Mirele Efros*, *The Slaughter*, *Khasye the Orphan*), while Goldfaden was only performed in 1947 with *Di Kishefmakherin* and *Two Kuni-Lemls*, the latter again only in 1958. Rotbaum himself concentrated on other Yiddish playwrights, particularly Sholem Aleykhem, whom he interpreted in a social context, and pronounced an anti-bourgeois attitude and sympathy for the poor, proletarian Jew... As time went by, non-Jewish playwrights were also staged there, among them numerous Soviet, East German or Polish representatives of socialist realism, such as *The Family* by Popov about Lenin's youth, Leon Kruczkowski's (who was minister of culture after the war) *Julius and Ethel*,<sup>38</sup> besides "acceptable" playwrights, the dramatic realists from the other side of the Iron Curtain, like Eugene O'Neil's *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1924, a drama about the discrimination of the black population), Theodore Dreiser's scenic adaptation of *An American Tragedy* (1925), and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949). A similar repertory was staged at Bucharest, incidentally. It is notable that Goldfaden ceased to be reinterpreted, and that he was rather absent from the Polish-Jewish stage in those years, especially after Rotbaum left the Jewish State Theater, whereas in Bucharest he was still staged rather more frequently. This might have also been due to the fact that in Poland the majority of the Jewish population who might have been the audience of this theater and felt at home with Yiddish folklore had left the country in waves of emigration, leaving an empty space. The new spectators had to be "educated" by other means and topics. In Romania, the Jewish spectators remained more numerous for a longer period of time. But there, too, as we have seen, Goldfaden's star was fading.

While in Poland anti-Semitism and anti-Israeli sentiments following the Six Day War in 1967 and 1968 thrived, and Poland had expelled its Jewish citizens, Romania under Nicolae Ceaușescu chose the opposite way and was the only communist country which did not break off diplomatic relations with Israel. This was positive for Israel

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Goldfaden together with Hurvitz and Lateiner. He was a modernist, his drama tends to melodrama and is naturalistic and realistic.

<sup>38</sup> About the heroes of this side of the Iron Curtain, the Jewish couple Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, American communists who were charged with passing information about the American atomic bomb to the Soviet Union and executed after having been found guilty of conspiracy to commit espionage.

Bercovici and his theater, which now went on a 42-day tour to Israel in 1968, where it was triumphantly received and attended by 35,000 spectators.<sup>39</sup>

### **Goldfaden's adoption by Israil Bercovici**

In Bercovici's above mentioned history of the centenary of Yiddish theater in Romania, the foremost place is occupied by Goldfaden, whom he calls, quoting the obituary, not without a certain amount of pathos, "Poet and prophet."<sup>40</sup> First, it is the implied biblical prophet<sup>41</sup> who, often enough, was also a poet in a sense. And in turn, many poets have written verses which could be called prophetic. This term was thus not very original, as it has been applied to poets since the Antiquity (for instance Ovid), and especially in the Romantic period.<sup>42</sup> Up to today (when it is used, for example, to depict Anna Ahmatova<sup>43</sup>) it has several implications, and it is of significance to see them in the light of Bercovici's context. The young Goldfaden did publish poems, but some unfair critics deny him the status of a poet. Of course, if one compares Goldfaden to Lord Byron or William Blake, who are considered to be "the" poets and prophets, this may be true. On the other hand he was a gifted folk poet who created popular songs, and as such he is known until today. In what sense could Goldfaden have been a prophet? For Bercovici, the fact that thousands of mourners attended Goldfaden's funeral in New York is an indication that he had prophetic qualities indeed. Considering Goldfaden's work as influenced by the European drama, one can agree that at least his operettas *Shulamis*, *Bar Kokhba* and *Ben-Ami*, with their positive traditional Jewish element or pro-Zionist character, could indeed be considered as prophetic in their tendency, reviving the spirit of Jewish nationalism. Bercovici, however, argues that instead of the hitherto bourgeois audience it was "the simple people" to whom Goldfaden's addressed his plays, and indicated primarily the anticipation of the awaking socialist movement.

But again, these were not the plays performed at the State Jewish Theater of Bucharest. The few staged there were either of the type of a light muse or made fun of the Eastern European ghetto life and praised the Enlightenment, topics which were already in fashion one hundred years earlier... We do not actually know, then, why Goldfaden was not a more frequent playwright in the Bucharest repertory as – portrayed by Bercovici – he would have suited it perfectly. From the plays we do know to have been shown on that stage, it was impossible for the audience to grasp Goldfaden's full standing within and importance for Yiddish culture. Maybe that is the reason why Israil Bercovici, who must have realized this obvious gap, wrote his own idealistic evaluation of Goldfaden instead, wanting to make some sort of amends.

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<sup>39</sup> I. Blayzor, Yiddish Theater Flourishes in Romania, in: *Hadassah Magazine*, Vol. 53, No. 1; cf. Grözinger 2002, 308.

<sup>40</sup> Bercovici 1976, 7.

<sup>41</sup> Pollard 1898, 327–332.

<sup>42</sup> e.g. Roston 1965.

<sup>43</sup> Reeder 1994.



Let us see what else Bercovici did write about Goldfaden: His introductory portrait of his hero is partially poetical, partially epic and to some extent exaggerated. In the first place, he names Goldfaden along with Itzhok Leybush Peretz and Yankev Gordin by using the traditional Jewish word for the revered Biblical ancestors, the “forefathers.” For both Peretz and Gordin, Bercovici claims, the Jewish theater was a place of continuation of the Jewish cultural tradition, and a bridge from the glorious ancient past to the present, at the same time giving an insight into the future, “by spinning the torn theater-thread,” generating from the religious and popular forms. However, Goldfaden, much more than these two “forefathers,” believed strongly that “the role which was once played by religion will now be replaced by the theater.” This was a religiously anti-orthodox position of course, as rabbis have throughout the ages since Talmudic times fiercely opposed the institution of Jewish theater. On the other hand, though, from the communist point of view it was again considered as absolutely “politically correct” and thus prophetic, being a herald of the new times to come.

Bercovici argues that by introducing Biblical heroes on the stage, transforming them into popular heroes and placing them next to simple, everyday Jewish figures, Goldfaden, who could not fall back upon a rich genuine Jewish theatrical tradition since none existed apart from the Purimshpil, drew a new line from the ancient Jewish theatrical sources (processions, holiday customs, prayer tunes and clothing) to his present. Moreover, Goldfaden “deprived the kings of their crowns and transformed the old Hassidic adepts of prayer into adepts of theater, and the visitors of synagogues into theater visitors.” But for Bercovici the difference and the step between a traditional Purimshpil and Goldfaden’s *Shulamis* or *Bar-Kokhba* as pieces of art seems to be enormous indeed, and so he declares Goldfaden a genius, comparing him even to the giant figure of Maimonides. Thus, in Bercovici’s interpretation or “reinvention,” Goldfaden is a luminous personage of our age and becomes a great epochal and pioneer intellectual figure, revolutionarily changing the traditional Jewish society from a religion-based into a theater-based one. Goldfaden, it seems, almost Moses-like, led the Jewish people out of the religious temple into the temple of arts (“kunst-templ”).<sup>44</sup>

Israil Bercovici, just like Jakob Rotbaum, believed in the communist credo that all mass media are there to teach and enlighten the masses. The “new” communist man and woman have the right to education, they are privileged and offered everything to advance their intellectual capacities (the technical term for that was “to elevate their cultural level”) for the benefit of the new socialist society.<sup>45</sup> Bercovici therefore regards his own work at the theater, newspapers and radio as a pedagogical mission, one he had to carry on also as Goldfaden’s legacy. In the second chapter of his book, Bercovici quotes from “Goldfadns groyse oytobyografye” (*Goldfadn-Bukh*, New York 1926): “Di umes ha-oylem haltn shoyt /vayt mit der efentlekher folks-shule oyf di breter.../un mir hobn nokh gornisht...”.<sup>46</sup> Therefore the Yiddish stage founded by Goldfaden should be considered as a sort of public evening school for adult education, Jewish education. In this case we can even be more precise: the school Bercovici

<sup>44</sup> Bercovici 1976, 28.

<sup>45</sup> Grözinger 2002, 281.

<sup>46</sup> Bercovici 1976, 14: “The nations in the world are already advanced having a public school on the stage..., whereas we have nothing yet...”

means is both a Jewish theater concerning the topics and a theater made by Jews. The audience, incidentally, as we saw in Bucharest or later in Warsaw, did not necessarily have to be Jewish. Cultural elevation can only be achieved if knowledge of culture is being actively handed on from one generation to the other, and such is the case of theater, a cultural event in which an audience of whatever origin can participate. For Bercovici, following Israel Zinberg in his *History of Old Literature from its Origins to the Haskalah*, the syncretistic play of dance-singing-music is the essence of theatrical culture since the most ancient times, and all these essential elements could be found in Goldfaden's plays. He thus presented Goldfaden as the "Beginning and the Continuation"<sup>47</sup> of the theatrical cultural tradition, and therefore the ideal teacher of the people – although this was not in fact really true in every aspect and did not reflect Goldfaden's complete activity.

Bercovici's often idealized portrayal of Goldfaden leaves out the above mentioned criticism with which Goldfaden's plays had to live after his successor and rival, Yankev Gordin, appeared on the Jewish dramatic firmament. Especially in socialist and communist circles, Goldfaden's works were seen as melodramatic, old-fashioned and therefore in need of rearrangement in order to meet the needs of the revolutionary theater program, as was the case with his *Sorceress (Di Kishefmakherin, 1877)* in Moscow in 1922.<sup>48</sup> This play, an operetta, the only play by Goldfaden more or less frequently staged in Bucharest, had a formative influence on the development of Yiddish theater on at least two continents – in the USA (1881) and the post-revolutionary Soviet Union (1922 at the GOSET Theater) – according to Paola Bertolone.<sup>49</sup> Although this play underwent modernization following its creation, the Bucharest theater made no such attempts in the case of other Goldfaden plays.

For Bercovici, just as for the earlier Jakub Rotbaum, Goldfaden enters the modern age, in his role as a people's teacher by means of an artistic medium. But it is not merely the function of providing aesthetic education which has been associated with theater before. It now becomes an important socio-political educatory means for changing the mentality of a minority that has so far been religious and thus considered as backward, into members of a new, secular and thus progressive socialist collective who would therefore be worthy of becoming equal citizens. This is the new and advanced "enlightenment" of the Jewish masses. According to Bercovici, Goldfaden being the "beginning" meant that his theater differed from the earlier attempts which took place in Warsaw in 1838, for instance. Warsaw, the Polish city, belonged to Russia after the partitions and its Jewish theater audience belonged to the bourgeois, not the workers' strata of the society. At that time, the Haskalah movement was beginning to gain influence in Eastern Europe, but the spirit of that age was still different. This accounted for the different approach of the early Yiddish plays in those days. Therefore Warsaw would not be the true cradle of the Jewish theater. In Romania, however, where new theaters were being founded at that time, contemporary historians began to develop a progressive theory of dramatic arts. Bercovici quotes

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<sup>47</sup> Bercovici 1976, 14.

<sup>48</sup> Veidlinger 2000, 46.

<sup>49</sup> Bertolone 2003, 79.

their evaluation of the theater as a place of mass education, which young and old, intellectuals and even illiterate people can attend. Theater offers more than a school, it is the biggest moral institution besides the church; the theater is a place where the noblest humanitarian and national feelings are aroused.<sup>50</sup> This was also Goldfaden's credo.

"Shtey oyf mayn folk/ ervakh fun dayn driml/ fun narishkayt makh an end."<sup>51</sup> Bercovici argues, like later Mikhoels and other Communist Party cultural authorities, that Goldfaden was a folk artist who wrote plays portraying genuine shtetl life, which, when combined with the newest stage styles, produced true revolutionary theater.<sup>52</sup> But, as Jeffrey Veidlinger's description of the debates in the Soviet Union show,

over the next few years [...] like the Moscow State Yiddish Theater, Goldfaden would be seen as a revolutionary who fought against the insipid rabbinism of his era in an effort to promote secular enlightened culture among the Jewish masses. However, the sentimentality and melodrama of his plays, which were geared towards bourgeois audiences, would remain a contentious subject.<sup>53</sup>

Bercovici quotes Goldfaden calling his first audience "Di niderike shikhtn des folks" – the low layers of the population – and this type of audience needed him most. Arts which derive from popular, folkloristic sources have the biggest impact on the people. As we can see, Bercovici portrayed Goldfaden as a revolutionary from several points of view, not just intellectually or from the artistic point of view, but also in the ideological, political sense of the word. When Bercovici wrote his book, Romania under the Ceaușescu regime was still firmly confined behind the Iron Curtain. The word "Popular" was a part of the name of the Republic of Romania. It was a magic, a bolshevist, a socialist and a Stalinist word. Popular culture, having been freed by the revolution, could finally serve the purpose of the "people." Bercovici wanted to or had to sound ideological. He traced the anti-Czarist spirit in Goldfaden's plays, especially as, at the end of his life, the first new revolutionary events since 1848 heralded at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the big political changes yet to come. The fact that Goldfaden could establish a professional theater nowhere else but in Romania, a country which has always played rather a marginal role in world history and whose geographical position was on the fringes, not in the centre of Europe, is for Bercovici, a Romanian patriot, another revolutionary event.

Bercovici's theses explaining the new formative role of Romania in this decisive process in the Jewish Diaspora are also based on the sometimes slanted findings of his contemporary Romanian Marxist-Leninist historians whose conception of history idealized the development of the country. It is not known in the general history of the revolution of 1848 that Romania played any important part in this "peoples' spring," as the communists called it, while it took hold of many countries in the realm of the Habsburg Monarchy and had notable effects on Hungary and Poland. But Israil Bercovici does not hesitate to draw a direct line from 1848, as one of the "most important historical events in Romania [...] when the writers stood up in the foremost

<sup>50</sup> Bercovici 1976, 44.

<sup>51</sup> Bercovici 1976, 99, quotation from *Ni be ni me ni kukuriku*: "Get up, my people, wake up from your dream, put an end to foolishness."

<sup>52</sup> Veidlinger 2000, 45 f.

<sup>53</sup> Veidlinger 2000, 46, quoting Y. Dobrushin, "Dray datn," *Di royte velt* 4 (April 1926), 91–94.

line in the struggle for the national and social right of the people,”<sup>54</sup> to Goldfaden’s time almost thirty years later. He argues that the 1848 revolution gave an impact and initiated the rapid cultural development and secularization which took place in Romania, making it a place where minorities’ and local theaters could be founded, becoming “schools of high ideas and high feelings,”<sup>55</sup> thus becoming ripe for such an institution as Goldfaden’s first Yiddish theater. This would have been impossible in another Eastern European country where, like in Russia, repression by political rulers and the church institutions still prevailed. The subsequent flowering of the Yiddish stage was due to the fact that the Jewish public allegedly loved grand public shows, and Bercovici underlines the importance of the Yiddish language for the masses of Jews for whom this, and not Romanian, was the mother tongue. And in the course of time, the Yiddish theater became an institution which played the important role of a cultural emissary not just for Jews but also for Romanians.<sup>56</sup> This was something Goldfaden certainly dreamed of.

Israil Bercovici, for whom the work at the theater was both a mission and a fulfillment of a dream, remained a lifelong disciple of Goldfaden and not of Gordin. He declared Yitzkhok Leybush Peretz as the legitimate heir to Goldfaden. It seems, though, that Bercovici, just like his Polish friend Jakub Rotbaum, belonged to the so-called “Goldfaden fraction,” and must have been put at a disadvantage in the Jewish State Theater of Bucharest, where Goldfaden did not play the main part as Bercovici might have wished. Goldfaden seems to have ceased to play the role of a socialist hero in these theaters. This might account for the visible absence of Goldfaden’s oeuvre in Bucharest. By establishing the first permanent Jewish professional repertory theater ensemble, Goldfaden’s dream had come true, but at the Jewish State Theater of Bucharest, just as at the State Jewish Theater in Warsaw, this dream had come to an end.

### **Goldfaden’s Renaissance?**

However, as mentioned above, fans keep his memory alive, long after it was necessary to reinvent him as a socialist hero. A kind of Goldfaden revival is now taking place, and at last “a theater pioneer gets his due,” as Nahma Sandrow writes: nowadays, interest in seeing his plays has increased, and when the Hebrew Actors Union decided to give out awards for excellence they named them the Goldies in honor of Avrom Goldfadn, in the form of statuettes, “silver-painted plaster renditions of the man himself, sporting a flamboyant cloak and moustache.” Sandrow also lists the documentary by Romanian filmmaker Radu Gabrea, Goldfaden’s Legacy: The Origins of Yiddish Theater, and there is the now annual International Goldfaden Festival of Jewish Theater in Jassy, Romania, co-founded by Moshe Yassur. The National Yiddish Theater Folksbiene in New York, the longest continuously running professional Yiddish theater in America and in the world, has had Goldfaden repeatedly in its

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<sup>54</sup> Bercovici 1976, 38.

<sup>55</sup> Bercovici 1976, 41, 67.

<sup>56</sup> Bercovici 1976, 108.

repertory, such as Goldfaden's burlesque comedy with songs *A Novel Romance* (Di kaprizne kalemoyd) in 2004. In the meantime, Goldfaden's operettas have become repertory staples in Montreal, Melbourne, Buenos Aires, and Tel Aviv. His plays are presented at festivals, like at KlezKamp, the weeklong program of Yiddish culture, because "The songs have melodies people love, and they tell a story. When something is a classic, it's a classic for a reason."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Sandrow 2006.

Agnieszka Graboń

## JEWISH ISSUES PRESENTED IN THE ACADEMIC PRESS 1918–1939

Jewish issues in the times of the Second Polish Republic have without doubt been discussed broadly by historians over the past few years. There are many studies concerning the attitude of parties and political groups towards the Jewish question. The image of Jewish life in different regions of Poland in the interwar period has been sketched at length.<sup>1</sup>

However, the attitude of Polish students towards the Jewish question has not been discussed sufficiently. Without question, the issue has been noted in the research concerning student political activism by Andrzej Pilch, whose monographs include chapters discussing the attitude of Polish students towards the Jews in Poland.<sup>2</sup> However, it has been presented as one of many threads. Anti-Semitic postulates concerning the academic ground formulated by the right wing have been mentioned in the works of, among others, P. Biliński, O. Bergman, S. Kilian, G. Radomski, Sz. Rudnicki and M. Sobczak.<sup>3</sup> A. Landau-Czajka has discussed sociologically the journalistic response to such problems as *numerus clausus* or *getto ławkowe* (“ghetto benches” – segregation at universities) in one chapter of her work.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, R. Modras develops the issue in a chapter of his book; however, he presents only the point of view of the Catholic press.<sup>5</sup> D. Libionka used similar sources in analyzing in one of his articles the attitude of the periodical *Odrodzenie* towards the Jewish

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<sup>1</sup> See A. Pakentreger, *Żydzi w Kaliszu w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1988; I. Kowalski, *Mniejszość żydowska w województwie poznańskim w latach 1919–1939*, *Kronika Wielkopolska* 1995, no. 4; G. Zalewska, *Ludność żydowska Warszawy w okresie międzywojennym*, Warszawa 1996; W. Wierzbieniec, *Żydzi w województwie łwowskim w okresie międzywojennym*, Rzeszów 2003; J. Szilinga (ed.), *Gminy wyznaniowe żydowskie w województwie pomorskim w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym (1920–1939)*, Toruń 2005; A. Marolewski, *Żydzi w Toruniu w okresie międzywojennym*, Toruń 2005; A. Wróbel, *Żydzi w Gdyni w latach 1926–1936*, Toruń 2005; K. Samsonowska, *Wyznaniowe gminy żydowskie i ich społeczności w województwie krakowskim (1918–1939)*, Kraków 2005.

<sup>2</sup> A. Pilch, *Studencki ruch polityczny w Polsce w latach 1932–1939*, Kraków 1972; *id.*, *Rzeczpospolita Akademicka. Studenci i polityka 1918–1933*, Kraków 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Sz. Rudnicki, *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny. Geneza i działalność*, Warszawa 1985; S. Kilian, *Mysł edukacyjna w ND w latach 1918–1939*, Kraków 1997; O. Bergmann, *Narodowa Demokracja wobec problematyki żydowskiej w latach 1918–1929*, Poznań 1998; M. Sobczak, *Stosunek ND do kwestii żydowskiej w Polsce w latach 1918–1939*, Wrocław 1998; P. Biliński, *Władysław Konopczyński. Historyk i polityk II Rzeczypospolitej (1880–1952)*, Warszawa 1999; Sz. Rudnicki, *Parlamentarzyści żydowscy w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 2004.

<sup>4</sup> A. Landau-Czajka, *W jednym stali domu... Koncepcje rozwiązania kwestii żydowskiej w publicystyce polskiej lat 1933–1939*, Warszawa 1998.

<sup>5</sup> R. Modras, *Kościół katolicki i antysemityzm w Polsce w latach 1933–1939*, Kraków 2004.

question.<sup>6</sup> S. Gajewski has discussed the attitude of Catholic academic organizations towards the issue in one of his articles, also presenting press reports.<sup>7</sup> D. Mycielska's study cannot be omitted, as it depicts the political attitude of Polish professors towards the conflict between Poles and Jews on academic grounds.<sup>8</sup>

All of the works listed above treat the topic globally, i.e. as concerning all the academic centers of the Second Polish Republic. There are also works that present the issue with reference to one particular academic city. In this field, the pioneering research of M. Natkowska presents the situation in Warsaw.<sup>9</sup> Some of the information presented by Natkowska can be found in a volume of collected studies edited by A. Garlicki.<sup>10</sup> The situation in Krakow is discussed by Pilch.<sup>11</sup> Valuable information concerning, for example, the conflict between Poles and Jews at the Jagiellonian University, is presented in studies by J. Dybiec and M. Kulczykowski,<sup>12</sup> while the situation at the Stefan Batory University in Wilno (now Vilnius) is described by J. Wołkonowski.<sup>13</sup> It is complemented by Z. Opacki's article, which concentrates on the attitude of some of the professors towards the anti-Semitic riots incited by right-wing youth.<sup>14</sup> Similar information concerning the Faculty of Polish Philology of this university is available in the work of T. Dalecka.<sup>15</sup> The present state of knowledge about the situation in Lwów (now Lviv) is enriched by the works of Z. Popławski and J. Draus.<sup>16</sup> W. Wojtkiewicz-Rok has dealt with the application of *numerus clausus* in the Faculty of Medicine of the Jan Kazimierz University.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>6</sup> D. Libionka, „Kwestia żydowska” – myślenie za pomocą clichés, *Odrodzenie 1935–1939. Przyczynek do historii antysemityzmu w Polsce, Dzieje Najnowsze* 1995, no. 3, 31–46; *ib.*, Kwestia żydowska w prasie katolickiej w Polsce w latach trzydziestych XX wieku, *Dzieje Najnowsze* 1999, no. 1, 119–123; *ib.*, Obcy, wrodzy, niebezpieczni – obraz Żyda i „kwestii żydowskiej” w prasie inteligencji katolickiej lat trzydziestych w Polsce, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 2002, no. 3, 318–338.

<sup>7</sup> S. Gajewski, Katolickie organizacje akademickie wobec kwestii żydowskiej w okresie II Rzeczypospolitej, *Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Rzeszowie, Seria społeczno-pedagogiczna i historyczna: Historia* 4, Rzeszów 1994.

<sup>8</sup> D. Mycielska, Postawy polityczne profesorów wyższych uczelni w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym, in: R. Czepulis-Rastenis (ed.), *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku*, *Studia* – 4, Warszawa 1985, 320–323.

<sup>9</sup> M. Natkowska, *Numerus clausus, getto ławkowe, numerus nullus, „paragraf aryjski”. Antysemityzm na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim 1931–1939*, Warszawa 1999.

<sup>10</sup> A. Garlicki (ed.), *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego 1915–1939*, Warszawa 1982.

<sup>11</sup> A. Pilch, *Studenci Krakowa w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej, ich ideowe, polityczne i społeczne zaangażowanie*, Kraków 2004.

<sup>12</sup> J. Dybiec, *Uniwersytet Jagielloński 1918–1939*, Kraków 2000; M. Kulczykowski, *Żydzi – studenci Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w okresie międzywojennym*, Kraków 2004.

<sup>13</sup> J. Wołkonowski, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w Wilnie i na Wileńszczyźnie 1919–1939*, Białystok 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Z. Opacki, Postawy profesorów Uniwersytetu Stefana Batorego w Wilnie wobec antysemityzmu na uczelni. M. Zdziechowski, M. Kridl, in: W. Moscovien, I. Fijałkowska-Janiak (eds.), *Jews and Slavs*, vol. 11: *Jewish-Polish and Jewish-Russian Contacts*, Jerusalem–Gdańsk 2003.

<sup>15</sup> T. Dalecka, *Dzieje polonistyki wileńskiej 1919–1939*, Kraków 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Z. Poławski, *Dzieje Politechniki Lwowskiej 1844–1945*, Wrocław 1993; J. Draus, *Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie 1918–1946. Portret kresowej uczelni*, Kraków 2007.

<sup>17</sup> W. Wojtkiewicz-Rok, *Rola Wydziału Lekarskiego UJK w kształtowaniu polskiego modelu nauczania medycyny. Studia medyczne UJK w latach 1920–1939*, Wrocław 1996.

The above review of works makes it clear that the attitude of the generation of intelligentsia studying in independent Poland towards the Jewish question has not been the subject of particular research or been comprehensively analyzed. Even though the so-called “Jewish question” has been discussed in the works mentioned above, it is presented only in the view of the academic relations between Poles and Jews. Apart from some remarks included in Pilch’s work, nobody has been interested in such issues as the image of the Jew existing among the students or their solutions to the “Jewish problem.” It must not be forgotten that they were supposed to become the future governing and opinion-forming elite. They were supposed to take over the leadership of a country that had regained independence after 123 years of captivity.

The aim of my Ph.D. dissertation, prepared at the Faculty of History of the Jagiellonian University, was to, at least partially, fill in the gaps in this field of research. As the basic source for the dissertation, a large collection of the student press from that period was chosen, as at that time the press was fully developed and became an important tool for presenting ideas and molding attitudes.<sup>18</sup> The basic source was accepted, even though it was clear that the image of the presented events could be distorted, since the press was an easy tool of political struggle and manipulation. However, if different periodicals are confronted with each other, the possibility of obtaining a true reflection of the situation remains.

The division of the student movement, and then of the press, according to ideological and political identification, i.e. nationalist, Catholic-nationalist, Christian, peasant, socialist, communist and pro-governmental or national (even though the term was in use only after May 1926) was first adapted by Pilch and consequently followed in the project. Thanks to those who have conducted similar research, other types of periodicals, i.e. sports or cultural ones, were set apart. The conclusions concerning the Jewish academic press drawn by Pilch were also crucial to my dissertation.

After reading thousands of references concerning the Jewish question presented in the academic press, one can draw the conclusion that the issue was of the greatest importance to students from the interwar period. However, the intensity of the interest was varied and depended upon the most significant factor, i.e. the ideological and political identification of a given periodical. It can be concluded that it was mainly the press of political and ideological organizations which took the floor; articles included in the student periodicals of other categories were rare. There were complex articles, feature articles, information in the form of reports or news, or reviews of various works concerning Jews. The nationalist press eagerly used poetic forms. There were many polemic articles.

Undoubtedly, the academic nationalist press was the most significant to deal with the Jewish question. Everybody who became familiar with it would share the grief of A. Hall, who once said that “if one looks through old issues of the nationalist pre-war press (...), *Myśl Narodowa* or *Gazeta Warszawska*, one may easily feel ashamed and embarrassed.”<sup>19</sup> The feeling of embarrassment increases when we take into consideration the fact that the press discussed was edited by and directed at “that part of the

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<sup>18</sup> A. Paczkowski, *Prasa polska w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1980.

<sup>19</sup> A. Hall, *Dziedzictwo Narodowej Demokracji*, London 1985, 39.



society” supposed to become the most important opinion-forming one, i.e. to students aspiring to become the elite. Unfortunately, the image of right-wing students is disadvantageous. The image of the Jew was vilified and anti-Semitic arguments were superficial, as they were rooted in the traditional and stereotypical anti-Semitic prejudices enriched by some new pseudoscientific theories. The Jewish issue was presented by the right-wing press as a worldwide conspiracy. Daniel Pipes, an American historian and the author of *Conspiracy: How the Paranoid Style Flourishes and Where It Comes from*, has noticed that the conviction that the goal of one particular group (here, the Jews) is power that can be gained through a plot, treated as the main driving force in history, is the basic element of conspiracy theories. There is nothing accidental or senseless in the development of history. The ideas that a Jew can be “a banker” and “a communist” as well, or that “lack of discipline is a kind of discipline indeed,” since the Jews have been deprived of central power, yet they have had control over the world from hiding, are inherent factors typical of viewing the world as ruled by an “anonymous superpower.” They were also typical of the academic right-wing press from the interwar period. Moreover, it is noticeable that the youth did not have any knowledge about what they were talking so often and so eagerly about. While writing about the alleged Jewish connections with freemasonry and communism, they quoted willingly such “classic” works as those of Stanisław Trzeciak or Roman Dmowski, which speak of ignorance hidden under the mask of “education.” The language of the commentary was rather poor. Irena Szmaj-Kamińska pays attention to the fact that the linguistic mechanism of duplicating some expressions which took the form of stabilized ideas ready to use, i.e. “Jewish invasion” or “Jewish method,” was widespread and concerned also the right-wing press. The kind of rhyme used, which can hardly be counted as poetry of a high quality, proves that the authors did not use sophisticated language to communicate with their readers. What is worrying as well is the evolution of the press in formulating increasingly radical anti-Semitic slogans encouraging the introduction of various restrictions on academic grounds, but also in social, economic and political fields. The journalistic campaign against scholars who “dared” to have different point of view on the Jewish question was morally disqualifying, especially as it would be difficult to find even one dissimilar opinion presented in the papers. It is significant that many of the published articles were not anonymous. Furthermore, they were often signed by the leading right-wing activists, i.e. W. Wasiutyński, Z. Stypułkowski, M. Reutt, Z. Rychter, J. Rembliński, B. Świdorski, J. Bielatowicz or J. Giertych. We should state clearly that the postulates concerning the Jewish issue were typical of all the right-wing groups and present in the papers as well. Some of them were particularly anti-Semitic, e.g. *Wszechpolak*, the number of whose articles concerning the Jewish issue reached almost 300 within three years. The significance of the ideas presented in the articles was remarkable, as the circulation of this periodical was up to 3000–4000 copies. A similar role was played by periodicals such as *Akademik*, *Awangarda*, *Akademik Polski*, *Alma Mater*, *Czuwamy*, *Głos*, *Głos Akademicki*, *Młodzi*, or those published under the auspices of the corporation. All of them treated the Jewish question as one of the most important political topics, even though they presented only one point of view. “Nulla dies sine littera iudaica” – this could be quoted after Emil Sommerstein, a Member of Parliament of the fifth term who

addressed the other members discussing continuously the Jewish question, although not being able to reach any conclusions.<sup>20</sup>

A similar problem concerns the national and Catholic stream's press, which distanced itself from radicalism and the actions of *Endecja* youth, but did not decide to condemn them in a decisive way. Also, the image of the Jew on their pages was an exact copy of the opinions spread by the rightist press; here the voices calling for "racial purity" and "unjewishing" of Polish life occurred as well. Yet the fact cannot be ignored that, in contrast to the nationalist press, there was some place for different opinions. After all, it was in the Catholic *Pax* that Antoni Gołubiew asked the question "What makes us different from ONR?" while F. Mirzyński presented "two sides of the current conflict" (taking into consideration the problem of the "bench ghetto"), not "the only right" side, as was done by rightist academics.<sup>21</sup> *Odrodzenie*, however, was elaborating on the motives for which the organization did not support "the bench plebiscite" in Lwów. Henryk Dembiński, still in his "pre-leftist" period, presented in *Wilcze zęby* numerous arguments opposing the *numerus clausus*.<sup>22</sup> Unfortunately, the general conclusion must lead to the statement that, in spite of reluctance for unconditional support of the anti-Semitic policy of *Młodzież Wszechpolska*, there was no voice of marked condemnation. They would rather concentrate on searching for justification for the anti-Semitic attitudes. In retrospect, one of the well-known commentators of that stream, Stanisław Stomma, admits that "Anti-Semitism was a disgraceful phenomenon, casting a shadow on that, in spite of all defects and warps, creative and valuable historical period".<sup>23</sup> One might agree here with Leszek Kołakowski: "those mild anti-Semites grow anti-Semites armed with knuckle-dusters, knives; passive and restrained anti-Semites create organizers of pogroms. (...) Toleration of anti-Semitism in today's weak symptoms becomes toleration of tomorrow's pogroms. (...)"<sup>24</sup>

The question whether the press of the national and Catholic stream, by its ambiguous attitude of "mild anti-Semitism," did not "grow" it in a more violent form, seems to be justified.

The attitude of the national faction towards this issue is a complicated matter. As has been mentioned a few times in this article, it was a group focusing various circles joined together only by recognition of Józef Piłsudski's authority. Therefore opinions about the issue were extremely differentiated. The results of the discussion survey carried out in *Dekady. Tygodnik Akademicki* in 1934–1939 may serve here as an illustration, as the votes represented the whole range of attitudes towards the Jewish question: starting with votes supportive of assimilation, through the fascination with

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<sup>20</sup> According to A. Landau-Czajka, Z. Landau, *Posłowie polscy w Sejmie 1935–1939 o kwestii żydowskiej*, in: *Rozdział wspólnej historii. Studia z dziejów Żydów w Polsce ofiarowane prof. Jerzemu Tomaszewskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, Warszawa 2001, 211–223.

<sup>21</sup> A. Gołubiew, *Co nas dzieli od ONR?*, *PAX*, R. IV(1 VII 1936), no. 9, p. 2; F. Mirzyński, *Dwie strony aktualnego konfliktu*, *PAX*, R. V (1–28 II 1937), no. 3–4, p. 2

<sup>22</sup> H. Dembiński, *Czem jest numerus clausus? Rzecz o tragicomicznych wynikach chochlika*, *Wilcze zęby*, no. 3, 10 I 1932, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> S. Stomma, *Pościg za nadzieją*, Paryż 1991, p. 47.

<sup>24</sup> L. Kołakowski, *Antysemici – pięć tez nienowych i przestroga*, in: W. Władyka, *Na czołówece. Prasa w październiku 1956 roku*, Warszawa 1998, 266–277.

Zionism, to the approval of boycott or accusing Jews of sympathies for subversive ideas.

However, the stream which can be called “middle-of-the road” expressed opinions representative for the group as a whole. The identification of “the Jewish question” in the 1920s was, for this faction, a reaction to rivals from the national faction constantly bringing it up. In that period, when the journalistic commentaries concentrated on proportional norms or the exclusion of Jews from academic organizations, student supporters of Józef Piłsudski declared themselves opponents of these slogans, presenting their motives in many articles. In the following period, when anti-Semitic slogans at the academic level were becoming harsher, the youth of this faction called them “the autumn maneuvers,” indicating in many articles what they considered the true motives of those events to be. Commentators from this group could not hide their indignation when “knuckle-dusters” and “revolvers” forced their way into universities; this was the reason for strong reactions to the bolder actions of *Młodzież Wszechpolska*. One of the methods, used quite commonly, was discrediting this organization by showing the sophistry of anti-Semitic slogans. Obviously, defense of Jews was not the only aim, to a large extent it was a pragmatic matter, a chance of gaining support at the cost of political rivals.

The press of this stream showed much less interest in the divagations about the essence of “being a Jew” and “omnipresent” influences of this nation in Polish life that were so characteristic of the right-wing faction. If anyone spoke out, he did it only to ridicule the image of the world entrapped by the Jewish influences created by rightist magazines. *Trybuna* and *Gazeta Artystów* excelled at that. We should not omit the fact that anti-Semitic “blunders” occurred here as well – for instance the statement of L. Stachórski judging Jews as the largest group among the deserters, or the opinion of a certain Kresowiec from *Bunt Młodych*, who saw in Jews the main propagators of communism. Searching for a constructive idea for the regulation of the burning Jewish question united the middle-of-the road stream. According to the press material, the solution was Zionism or possibly, emigrationism. These catchphrases were taken seriously; the frequent and quite exact popularization of T. Herzl’s idea among the readers can serve as evidence here. M. Birenbaum did so “as a guest” on the pages of *Przemiany*, but also Stachórski expressed his opinion about the matter. The conservative part of the youth concentrated on reports from K. Pruszyński’s journey to Palestine. The newspapers of this faction joined together in the criticism of methods that were becoming common towards the Jewish population in Nazi Germany. The joining factor was also the skepticism towards “home” methods of “unjewishizing” social and economic life, methods amounting to the struggle for the infamous “stand,” or introduction of Aryan articles into the statutes of various organizations. In the 1930s, the rising wave of anti-Semitism brought about a polarization of opinions. Some national newspapers came dangerously close to the disgraceful trend of rightist journalism mentioned previously. Without any doubt, unrivalled in this area remained *Akademik*. *Tygodnik*, about which Pilch wrote: “its publishers decided to ultimately oppress such hostile elements as Marxism, Jews and Masonry in the academic area

(...)”<sup>25</sup> A similar evolution took place in *Strzelec*; evidence is given by extremely anti-Semitic statements placed in *Prawdzie w oczy*, where T. Barski led the way. The political volt of that circle was not welcomed by the right wing with enthusiasm; it was rather accompanied by reluctance caused by the fear that such an important element from the right-wing political program might be appropriated. It is difficult to classify to any of these groups the attitude of *Legion Młodych*. Anti-Semitic statements came from to the leading activists of that organization as well; in a certain period the press of *Legion Młodych* created the famous slogan constituting the creed of that option: “Anti-Semitism of action.” Certain enunciations about the “bench ghetto” also seem ambiguous. However, the articles of their papers did not adopt the rhetoric presented on the right wing of the national faction. Therefore, *Legion Młodych* should probably be placed in the stream which I called middle-of-the-road.

On the other hand, the 1930s brought a separation of the left wing in the national faction. It was created by separatist organizations: ZPMD – *Lewica* and LM – *Frakcja*. Their press bodies were moving onto socialist positions, criticizing both the attitude of the right wing towards the Jewish question and the vision presented by most papers of the national faction.

The left-wing movement represented by the press of the socialist and communist youth opposed the anti-Jewish claims in a decisive manner. The leading slogan of the right-wing faction about “overproduction of intellectuals,” created to win supporters of proportional norms, was perceived by the left-wing students as a propaganda maneuver. The evidence, according to them, was the disastrous social and economic state of the country. This state needed the intervention and action of the educated people.

The left wing linked the “autumn maneuvers” (called here, in a more precise way, “pogroms”) with another tuition payment due in November; the bourgeois rightist youth turned at that time to the populist slogan “Beat the Jew” to divert the attention of indigent youth from the most crucial thing: the struggle against the exploitation system. In the communist press, the voices of criticism could be noticed not only towards the right wing and the ruling Reform but also towards ZNMP and PPS – for (in the communists’ opinion) too mild methods of fighting in the defense of Jews, especially in the situation after the so-called Vilnius incidents. There was no difference in the attitude towards the “bench ghetto” problem between the mentioned groups. The left-wing press condemned it unanimously, seeing in the attempts of establishing it the elements of fascism in Polish political life. The authority of scholars who fought for Jewish students’ rights, tarnished by the rightist press, was also defended here.

The solution of the Jewish problem in Poland, according to the left wing, was not Zionism, as this was identified with Jewish nationalism. It was not the only objection raised against the idea. It was also accused of a utopian nature – the vision of the departure of the indigent Jewish masses to “Erec” would certainly turn out to be a mirage. People were anxious that the increased amount of Jews (even those richer ones) emigrating to Palestine would become the source of a new “imperialistic” war.

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<sup>25</sup> A. Pilch, *Prasa studencka w Polsce 1918–1939. Zarys historyczny. Bibliografia*, in: *Zeszyty Naukowe UJ* 1001, Kraków 1990, 39.

What, then, was the optimal solution? For the left wing it was a common struggle, together with the Jewish workers released from the influence of the orthodox and bourgeois circles, for the realization of revolutionary ideals, which were to destroy national differences.

The peasant youth seldom took the floor in the matter in question. Short pieces of information scattered in the few papers of this group show that the Jewish population was perceived frequently as a rival and competitor in many aspects of social or economic life. Getting close to the youth of the national camp, members of the peasant party opted for resolving the Jewish question by emigration carried out in a reasonable manner.

Writing about anti-Semitism as an attitude typical of the abovementioned group of Polish interwar students one cannot ignore the fact that in the Europe of that time Poland was not a “Jew-eating enclave” – unfortunately, anti-Semitism was the determinant of activities for many societies. This was confirmed not only by Polish press reports but also by Jewish ones, which continued to inform successively about the worsening situation of the Diaspora in almost all countries of the continent. Moreover, one cannot ignore the fact that the social and political reality of that time, with its hard experience from the partitions, and increased antagonism in conjunction with hardships of post-war reality, was conducive to the shaping of nationalist attitudes saturated with hostility towards foreign national groups that were located within the Polish borders.<sup>26</sup>

In spite of that fact, we should ask about the consequences of the anti-Semitic propaganda spread by the major part of the academic press. Certainly, from the methodological point of view, it is impossible to establish exactly the influence of the press publications on the student readers. However, without any doubt, by creating a demonic image of the Jew – the only and omnipresent enemy – they contributed to some kind of “narcosis” of Polish society towards the real danger – the Soviet Union and the Third Reich. Czesław Miłosz expressed this accurately, writing that “Polish anti-Semitic obsessions reached psychosis, and in the late 1930s almost insanity, making it impossible to clearly realize the danger of war.”<sup>27</sup> We should accept with distress and humility the possibility that propaganda was able to have an impact on the attitude of Polish people during the Holocaust. The exhortations of *Wszepolak* in 1938 to lock Jews in ghettos, separate them from Poles with barbed wire, although at that time they could not raise the horrifying vision of concentration camps, death factories and crematory chimneys, antagonized both national groups living next to each other, took away the Jewish sense of security and roused the demons of extremism. The truth also demands that one more thing be mentioned. For many anti-Semitic leaders of the pre-war intelligentsia the Holocaust was a kind of catharsis inducing them to revise their attitude towards Jews – to defend them even at the cost of their own lives. It is worth recalling Jan Mosdorf or Jan Brzeski.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. J.J. Terej, *Idee, mity, realia. Szkice dziejów Narodowej Demokracji*, Warszawa 1971; E. Gellner, *Narody i nacjonalizm*, Warszawa 1991.

<sup>27</sup> Miłosz cited in M. Janion, Spór o antysemityzm, in: *Kontrapunkt. Magazyn Kulturalny Tygodnika Powszechnego*, no. 7 (45), 29 X 2000, p. 5.

<sup>28</sup> Jan Mosdorf – the leader of Młodzież Wszechpolska and ONR, during the Second World War as a prisoner of Pawiak and Auschwitz, he was an active member of a camp conspiracy, helping many Jewish

To keep the necessary proportions in the discussion of the issue, the floor was given to the Jewish academic press, in which about 800 articles connected with the subject were found. This press was no less varied than the Polish one; it was divided to the same extent. The Zionists had their eyes fixed on a massive and, in their opinion, visionary idea of rebuilding the national home in Palestine; till that time they wanted to be treated in the Diaspora countries in an equal way. Socialist-Zionists also intended to build their future homeland in Palestine, but on the basis of a model adopted “from the most perfect world, the USSR.” Assimilators, whose political program was passing away, did not lose their hope for the agreement with Polish society. Jewish students, leaning towards leftist ideals, assumed that the solution was the agreement with the Polish Left, agreement above national divisions.

In spite of these differences, when the right wing started to preach their anti-Semitic slogans, those factions formed a common front of protest in the name of observance of the elementary rights of Jewish academics and Jews in general. However, it was not homogeneous – there were many differences in opinions about the methods of the fight and its sense at all. Relations with Polish academic organizations that could play the role of potential allies in the struggle were not going well. This caused much disappointment among the Jewish academics, because they were left alone with the problem, the more so because the reliable factors did not guarantee their full safety. Therefore a bitterness appeared in the press, sometimes turning into accusations towards Polish students (sometimes deeply unjust), the sense of purposelessness in undertaking educational efforts in Poland and the interest in studying abroad. In the face of “anti-Semitic grumbles” in Europe the Zionist press more and more often suggested that the place where Jewish academics should aim was Mount Scopus, with the Hebrew University.

A sad reflection emerges after comparing the Jewish academic press to material in the Polish student press. This reflection is expressed well by the words of Andrzej Szczypiorski: “both communities, Jewish and Polish, were stepping into Hitler’s occupation separated from each other. This distance, strengthened deliberately with the occupant’s policy, led to a situation in which the two communities were dying separately.”<sup>29</sup>

In the light of the above remarks it is justifiable to claim that for a considerable section of students in interwar Poland anti-Semitism was the indicator of action, or at least the subject of their interest. It certainly cannot soothe the national consciousness. This would be the right place to cite the opinion of Antony Polonsky, claiming that

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prisoners to get to a hospital block instead of a gas chamber. Shot by Germans in 1943; Jan Brzeski – one of the leaders of Młodzież Wszechpolska at the Jagiellonian University, chief of *Bratnia Pomoc Medyków*, he was seen as a co-organizer of “the autumn maneuver”, during the Second World War helped the Jews for which he was honored: Pilch, *Studenci...*, *op.cit.*, 156.

<sup>29</sup> A. Szczypiorski quoted in M. Kula, *Uparta sprawa: żydowska? polska? ludzka?*, Kraków 2004, 248.

Overcoming our own past is always a very important matter. We must try to see it the way as it was in reality, unadorned and without any myths (...). The problem arises when no one wants to talk about it. Then the silence itself should be put down to our blame (...).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cited in M. Domagalska, *Antysemityzm dla inteligencji? Kwestia żydowska w publicystyce Adolfa Nowaczyńskiego na łamach „Myśli Narodowej” (1921–1931) i „Prosto z mostu” (1935–1939): na tle porównawczym*, Warszawa 2004, 285.

Anna Novikov-Almagor

## ZBĄSZYŃ, 1933

In collective memory, the exiles who crossed the German-Polish border to the small town of Zbąszyń are usually associated with the year 1938, in October of which year some 18,000 Jews of Polish origin were expelled from Germany to Poland. Research and textbooks alike give special importance to this event.<sup>1</sup> A retrospective view sees this migration as an integral part of the succession of events, whose dramatic meaning is associated with Kristallnacht and the Second World War. In collective memory it is easier to connect the years 1938 and 1939 than to look for an earlier connection with the year 1933.

The archive of the B'nai B'rith District XIII of Poland, which is now in the State Archive in Krakow, shows that the 1938 story of Zbąszyń had its own pre-history in the year 1933. In the spring of that year, many Jews of Polish origin crossed (or were expelled) via the German-Polish border and arrived in Zbąszyń. These archival materials reveal information to us about this first expulsion, almost unknown in the research. There are, in addition, important questionnaires that could help to identify the anonymous Jewish refugees of April 1933

In this article I will concentrate exclusively on Zbąszyń, examining, firstly, how this small town suddenly came to be known as early as year 1933, and how its Jewish community obtained the necessary experience to deal with refugees and establish contact with large Jewish organizations: skills that, ironically, turned out to be extremely helpful in October 1938. Secondly, I will try to sketch the character of those first refugees, whose existence until now was virtually unknown.<sup>2</sup> Finally, I will examine the attitude of the Polish authorities in Zbąszyń to them. How might this attitude in the year 1933 be characterized?

The town of Zbąszyń (Ger. Bentschen) is situated in the area of Wielkopolska (Greater Poland), approximately 70 kilometers from the regional capital Poznań. First mentioned in written sources in 1231, it resulted from the Second Partition of Poland in

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<sup>1</sup> A list of all the research literature that studies and mentions the expulsion to Zbąszyń in 1938 could itself be the length of an article. I will mention, therefore, only several important examples: Gelband 1964: 35–45; Arad 1981: 121–124; Tomaszewski 1988: 289–315; Gutman 1990: 1726–1729; Margalioth 1990: 103–104; Tomaszewski 1998; Brenner 1996/1998: 220–224; Rozett/Spector 2000: 491–492.

<sup>2</sup> Yifat Weiss is one of the few scholars dealing with the background of Jews of Polish origin who fled from Germany back to Poland. In her book she provides a portrait of Jewish exiles of Polish origin. Weiss mentions the reports of the *Reichsstelle für das Auswanderungswesen* (Reich office for migration matters) about the background of the refugees. However, my article deals with materials belonging to the Polish side of the border, with those refugees who had already experienced the exile and only with those who arrived in Zbąszyń. However, in the interviews recorded by “Amiticia,” the refugees themselves told of their life in Germany and the circumstances of their leaving that country. Their personal narratives were not part of an official report and therefore seem more convincing than the German official reports: Weiss 2000: 140–142.



the year 1793 and became part of the Kingdom of Prussia. After the Napoleonic Wars, Zbąszyń was within the Grand Duchy of Posen and later the Province of Posen. In the year 1920, after the Greater Poland Uprisings, Zbąszyń was included in the territory of the Second Polish Republic and became one of its border towns. In 1931 its inhabitants numbered about 5,432, including 52 Jews.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of a few days in 1933, what had until then been a tiny unknown Jewish community came to be known through the whole of Europe. During the first few months of the year, the Jewish community of Zbąszyń had to mobilize its resources and deal with the new dramatic reality: a wave of Jewish refugees from Germany. The Jewish expulsion from Germany on 28 October 1938 served as a vivid reminder to the Jewish population of Zbąszyń of those first days of forced migration, in 1933. Then, for the first time, the inhabitants of the town had been witnesses to the beggarly state of the refugees – victims of the cruelty of the new regime in its first months.

The memories of the Jews who were expelled from Germany in October 1938 give the impression that the various Jewish organizations reacted rapidly to their plight and soon made available to them the necessary material help and organization. One may therefore presume that such a quick reaction and expertise as to what to do in Zbąszyń in 1938 were, at least to some degree, the result of experience gained during the smaller wave of expulsion in 1933, at which time Zbąszyń was changed from an unknown border town to one of the famous points of emigration and expulsion: a kind of a “prelude” to its transformation that became symbolic after 1938.

Almost immediately after Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor of Germany on 27 January 1933, even before the burning of the Reichstag and the 9th German Reichstag election of 5 March, a part of the *Ostjuden* Jews were forced to return to Poland. As early as 10 February 1933, the Jewish community of Zbąszyń sent a letter to the renowned Jewish historian Prof. Moses Schorr in Warsaw, to the Board of the Jewish community in Warsaw and to the Jewish Deputies in the Sejm, urging the establishment of a fund for the Jewish refugees crossing the border into Poland from Germany.<sup>4</sup> When not a single one of these addressees reacted, the community of Zbąszyń dispatched a delegate, who attempted to establish personal contact with Mazur, the president of the Jewish community in Warsaw. Nevertheless, this contact likewise did not bear fruit. In the words of Mazur, the Warsaw community “did not currently have time for such matters, because of their involvement in affairs of greater importance.”<sup>5</sup>

In the course of February and the first two weeks of March, the Jewish community of Zbąszyń continued to be the destination of an “essential and constant flow of refugees, which constantly increases.”<sup>6</sup> It seems that during this period the community had to house the indigent newcomers and care for their needs from its own resources.

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<sup>3</sup> Jonas 1909; Gutman 1990: 1726; Olejniczak-Zaworonko 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Moses Schorr was a professor of oriental studies at Warsaw University, the first historian who systematically studied the history of Polish Jewry. He was one of the creators of the Institute for Judaic Studies, and, later, of the Judaic Library, and was a vice-president of the B’nai B’rith Order of the Polish District. In 1935 Schorr was chosen to be a member of the Senate of the Second Polish Republic.

<sup>5</sup> APKr, BB 235, 25.

<sup>6</sup> APKr, BB 235, 25.

Since the arrival of the refugees continued unabated and all funds were exhausted, on 21 March the Jews of Zbąszyń again appealed to Moses Schorr. This time they were more concrete in their pleas, asking for the organization of a committee for the refugees “returning through the border of Zbąszyń.”<sup>7</sup>

As vice-president of the B’nai B’rith Order in the Polish District, Schorr decided to contact in this matter the President of the Order, Leon Ader.<sup>8</sup> On 2 April he wrote concerning the matter of the Zbąszyń Jews:

I completely understand that this small community cannot drag on such a burden its own barges and that larger communities in Poland have to come with help... and assist the border community in the fulfillment of its heavy duty.<sup>9</sup>

Schorr proposed to provide a certain sum from the “Emergency Fund” to be distributed in Zbąszyń. The *Amiticia* lodge of Poznań was to assume responsibility for this distribution and for the care of the migrants.<sup>10</sup>

The central administration of the Order in Krakow reacted rapidly to his letter. Two days later the *Amiticia* lodge, the one closest to Zbąszyń, was asked to investigate the situation there. A representative had to find out certain facts so as to shed light on the whole situation in the small border town. Among other things, he was asked to estimate the size of the Jewish community in Zbąszyń, its head, whether it had a rabbi and, if so, his name. In addition the representative had to ascertain when the return of the Polish Jews had started, how many refugees had crossed the border, whether they had any possessions and how much the community of Zbąszyń had spent on the support of the refugees.<sup>11</sup>

At the same time the Grand Lodge sent letters to Poland’s three largest lodges, in Krakow, Warsaw and Lwow, asking them to create special foundations for the refugees.<sup>12</sup> A week later, on 13 April 1933, the Grand Lodge transferred 300 zloty to the bank account of the Poznań lodge. This sum was taken from the Emergence Fund of the Polish B’nai B’rith District and was intended to meet the needs of the refugees in Zbąszyń.<sup>13</sup>

In the first week of May the delegates of the *Amiticia* lodge completed a set of brief interviews with the refugees who had arrived in Zbąszyń between the dates of 5 April and 1 May 1933 and were still residing there. The information included the name and age of the person, his or her occupation, the date of remigration to Germany and the

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<sup>7</sup> APKr, BB 235, 25, 26.

<sup>8</sup> The B’nai B’rith organization was founded in the US in 1843 by twelve Jewish immigrants from Germany. Its aim was to fight anti-Semitism and to promote Jewish rights and education. The B’nai B’rith thirteenth District of Poland, with its Grand Lodge in Krakow, was founded in 1924: Czajeczka 1994: 12–13; Kargol 2004: 69–70.

<sup>9</sup> APKr, BB 82, 77.

<sup>10</sup> The official name of the foundation, organized by the Polish B’nai B’rith District, was *Fundusz na wypadek katastrof* (Emergency Fund). It was created in January 1926 by the General Committee of the Polish Order. It aimed to aid the victims of catastrophic events, and every member was obliged to pay an annual contribution of 50 cents: Czajeczka 1994: 16–17.

<sup>11</sup> APKr, BB 235: 5–6.

<sup>12</sup> APKr, BB 235: 9–10.

<sup>13</sup> APKr, BB 235: 13.

circumstances of remigration to Poland, the refugee's desired destination in Poland and whether he or she had any possessions or material resources.

In the case of the refugees who had been exiled to Zbąszyń in 1938 and had survived the war, detailed testimonies were recorded and catalogued, and most of them are now in the archives of the Yad Vashem museum. To the best of my knowledge, there is no information about the Jewish refugees of Polish origin who had migrated to the same place five years earlier, other than the interviews done by the *Amiticia* lodge. They are, therefore, a rich source of scarce and significant information.

Doron Niederland and Yifat Weiss mention the sources from the *Reichsstelle für das Auswanderungswesen*, a governmental office that had been in existence since the period of the First German Republic but had been through certain changes since early 1933. At that time it started to deal in a significant way with Jewish migration. According to the office reports, the Eastern Jews left Germany in the year 1933 because of destitution and lack of means.<sup>14</sup> However, the facts known to us from the B'nai B'rith sources call this statement into question.

At the beginning of May 1933, the representatives of *Amiticia* questioned 35 refugees in Zbąszyń: seven female and 28 male. Most of them (31 of the 35) were (or seemed to be) between 18 and 60 years old, and all of them (except two youngsters who were under the age of 18) had an occupation and had been regularly employed in Germany.<sup>15</sup> The refugees were quite varied in their professions: two blacksmiths, four tailors and seamstresses, three shoemakers, three commercial apprentices, two commercial travelers, one furniture store owner, one candy store owner, one restaurateur, five merchants, two hairdressers, one baker, one furrier, one laborer and four people with their own businesses, whose nature is unclear.<sup>16</sup> The picture, therefore, was very different from the one drawn by the migration office in Germany. Even though the refugees did not belong to the highest stratum of the German-Jewish population, they were certainly not at its poorest levels, being regularly employed: at least until the year 1933. Szmul Josef Bude, for example, the owner of a restaurant in Charlottenburg in Berlin, reported to the interviewers that he had left a three-room furnished house with a kitchen in Germany, together with his business. Elimelech Laske, who was born in Oświęcim and had lived in Gelsenkirchen in Westphalia for 12 years, had to leave his furniture store there with an estimated value of 10,000 marks.<sup>17</sup>

Another refugee was a boxer named Aron Szmulewicz. After losing his livelihood in London he had moved to Berlin, worked for a year in the fruit trade in the Kaiser-Wilhelmstrasse and "earned well" before his arrest and expulsion to Poland.<sup>18</sup>

The example of Szmulewicz, as a short-term settler in Germany, was an exception among the interviewed refugees; 21 of the 35 had lived in Germany for more than 10

<sup>14</sup> Niederland 1988: 29–30; Weiss 2000: 140–142.

<sup>15</sup> Among these were two young men aged 18 and 20, hairdressers by profession, who tried to cross the Polish German border in mid-April and were caught by the Polish police. After losing all of their possessions and business in Warsaw they had decided to seek a job in Germany, in spite of the new National Socialist regime: APKr, BB 248: 41.

<sup>16</sup> APKr, BB 248: 37–46.

<sup>17</sup> APKr, BB 248: 37.

<sup>18</sup> APKr, BB 248: 41.

years, while seven had been born there. Two of the refugees could speak only German. Most of those interviewed (25 persons) had lived in Berlin; others came from Jena, Hamburg, Gelsenkirchen, Kehl, Karlsruhe, Leipzig and Duisburg.

What forced these relatively prosperous and settled people, mostly middle-aged, to escape to Poland? One reason was common to all of them – the pressure exerted on them by the National Socialist regime to leave; the differentiation among them lay in the circumstances of their moving. Seven of them had left Germany after losing their jobs on account of their Jewish origins. Artur Gleisner, for example, was born in Oświęcim, lived in Germany for 14 years and worked as a merchant; his manager was forced to discharge him together with all the other Jewish personnel.<sup>19</sup>

Another 14 refugees migrated because of the persecution and pressure from the National Socialist activists. Some left immediately after being threatened – in the street, at their workplaces or at home. Others left after having been beaten up during their arrest, on the streets or in their own homes.

The most eloquent cases could be perhaps those of David Wajnsztok and Anszel Rochberger. Wajnsztok was a tailor who had lived in Berlin for 11 years. In late March and early April of 1933, the National Socialists broke into his shop three times with the excuse of looking for a hidden weapon. They called him a “Polish Jew,” robbed him, beat him severely and locked him in the bathroom. Following the threats that he would be beaten again, Wajnsztok, who had just been released from hospital, left Germany.<sup>20</sup>

Rochberger was a tailor who had lived in Germany for 17 years. One day after the boycott of 1 April 1933 (see below), he “was arrested without any reason and sent to jail, where he was tortured day after day for 14 days. In front of his eyes other Jews were shot without any reason or judgment, and [he] saw and experienced there even more terrible cruelties.”<sup>21</sup> At the same time, his house was robbed by the National Socialists, and his wife was brutally beaten. After his release from jail, in spite of his damaged health, Rochberger quickly left Germany.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, there was the last group of Jewish migrants who were expelled under duress and forced to cross the German-Polish border. Of these nine people, six crossed the border on 5 April, and the other three in the course of the month (7, 19, 27 April). Three of them had come from Berlin, the others from Hamburg, Karlsruhe, Leipzig, Duisburg and Gelsenkirchen. The process of expulsion was usually a brutal one. Henschel Kelmanowicz, a smith who had lived in Berlin since 1906, was beaten on the street by National Socialists, who broke his left leg. He was then “transported to the Polish border in bandages.”<sup>23</sup> Aron Szmulewicz, the boxer who had worked in Berlin for a year, was arrested on the street without cause and severely beaten. In jail the former boxer “could only lie... and is so weak now that [he] can hardly walk.” Immediately after his release from jail he was transported to the border without the

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<sup>19</sup> APKr, BB 248: 44.

<sup>20</sup> I APKr, BB 248: 39, 46.

<sup>21</sup> These interviews, based on oral personal narratives, should perhaps be approached with a measure of caution.

<sup>22</sup> APKr, BB 248: 42.

<sup>23</sup> It is unclear where and by whom Kelmanowicz was bandaged, since it seems unlikely that the National Socialist who escorted him at least as far as the train to the border would do so.

possibility of taking any of his own belongings with him. According to Szmulewicz's testimony, his whole body was covered with wounds and bruises, and he arrived in Poland "sick, exhausted and hungry."<sup>24</sup>

The question that arises here is whether these acts of brutality and expulsions had any connection with the general wave of violence that swept Germany in April 1933. From the interviews it is evident that most of the violent events or expulsions were concentrated either in late March and early April or on 19 April and the days that followed (with the exception of one that occurred on 14 March). The continuity of the April anti-Jewish events should be seen as a background for the violence and expulsions described in the interviews, and points to a connection between the events. The sources, cited by Jerzy Tomaszewski, help to complete the picture shedding light on the reasons for this wave of anti-*Ostjuden* aggression. Already on 15 March the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent out a circular letter to various *Länder*. Among other items was an announcement calling on them to get rid of the local *Ostjuden*. On 16 March some Polish diplomats in Germany sent a report about the anti-Jewish (especially anti-*Ostjuden*) actions and about the National Socialist threats against the Jewish merchants.<sup>25</sup> Thus on 28 March the National Socialist government declared a boycott of Jewish stores, physicians and lawyers, and starting 1 April caused a mass wave of anti-Jewish violence in the days that followed. The second period of brutality against the refugees and their expulsion occurred in the last third of that month. A further law, of 21 April, against kosher slaughter, was clearly anti-Jewish in character. It seems likely that this measure further inflamed the National Socialist activists to act against the Jews, especially the *Ostjuden*.

The Jews who were expelled to Poland in the year 1933 can be seen as the predecessors of those who were expelled in October 1938. It seems that the National Socialist regime began forcibly expelling the foreign citizens from the first months of its existence, albeit at first in a limited way. Moreover, one can assume that in October 1938 the German authorities did not invent a new practice, sending Jews to Zbąszyń, but reverted to the one that had previously proved successful, even though on a much smaller scale. In 1933 the Polish authorities had immediately received these refugees and offered them free tickets to any destination inside the country; tickets were distributed at the train station of Zbąszyń by the railway police station or the emigration office active in the border town.<sup>26</sup> Thirty people among the refugees received such tickets. It seems that the criterion for this governmental aid was forced departure from Germany. As a result, two Polish citizens who were caught trying to cross the border towards Germany and one refugee who could not explain the reason for his leaving Germany were not eligible for these tickets and received them only from Jewish charity sources.<sup>27</sup>

However, the charity sources at their disposal were rather limited. All the migrants arrived in Poland "without a penny in their pocket", leaving behind in Germany all

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<sup>24</sup> APKr, BB 248: 41.

<sup>25</sup> Tomaszewski 1998: 27–29.

<sup>26</sup> Tomaszewski 1998: 37–46.

<sup>27</sup> Tomaszewski 1998: 41–42.

their possessions and savings.<sup>28</sup> The B'nai B'rith lodge *Amiticia* used funds that were sent from Krakow to provide the first essential material aid. Every individual or sometimes a whole family received an amount of up to 15 Polish zloty – 3–4 zloty on average – which was sufficient for only one or two meals. In total, 35 people received from *Amiticia* 112.5 zloty for their immediate needs.

Thus, as these testimonies show, the expulsion of the Jews to Zbąszyń in 1938 was not a unique event, but had a precedent in the events that had taken place five years earlier. What still remains to be examined are the differences between the events of 1933 and 1938. Given that the stage, the actors and the producers of the two performances of the play were virtually the same, the question that arises is: what changes did the script undergo?

## ABBREVIATIONS

APKr = Archiwum Państwowe, Kraków

BB = B'nai B'rith Collection

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<sup>28</sup> Variations of this phrase were used by many refugees in their interviews.

Edith Simon

**“ON TRANSLATING THOMAS MANN”**  
**Edited with an Introduction and Commentary**  
**by Henry I. MacAdam**

*After all, every translator knows that translating is a sort of trick, a device like the sleight-of-hand operator's to attract attention to something in order to distract it from something else.*

Lowe-Porter 1966, 196.

*Without her [Lowe-Porter's] translations, the name of Thomas Mann might well be as little known to the English-speaking world as that of his brother Heinrich.*

Thirlwall 1966, vi.

## **Introduction**

Among the literary papers of the late Edith Simon (1917–2003) is a typescript essay entitled “On Translating Thomas Mann.” Internal evidence suggests that it was written in the late 1960s, approximately 40 years after Mann’s monumental *Der Zauberberg* (1924) was translated into English as *The Magic Mountain* (1928) by Helen Tracy Lowe-Porter. Simon’s essay is critical of the quality of Lowe-Porter’s translation of *The Magic Mountain* and is full of suggested re-translations as well as a closer look at several images embedded in German culture, e.g. language; literature, mythology/folklore – that Mann drew upon for “special effects” in the epic novel that ensured his nomination for and acceptance of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1929 (the politicized head of the Nobel Committee cited *Buddenbrooks* as the reason for the award). Simon wrote her essay at a time when Lowe-Porter’s rendition of Mann’s major works was still garnering plaudits from reviewers.

That essay by Simon, published here for the first time, and another shorter essay on writing historical fiction, are part of her creative legacy now archived within her art studio in Edinburgh, Scotland. I know of only one article (Koch-Emmery 1952–1953) in print before “On Translating Thomas Mann” was written that takes issue (obliquely) with Lowe-Porter’s credentials as the exclusive translator of Mann (from 1926 until his death in 1955) for the prestigious American publishing firm of Alfred A. Knopf. Unfortunately a more wide-ranging critique of Lowe-Porter as translator was never published and to this day remains little utilized although available to scholars (Hayes 1974). Not until David Luke wrote the “Introduction” to his translation of several Mann stories was the reading public aware that those “official” translations were

deeply flawed in several ways (Luke 1970; republished with the addition of his translation of *Death in Venice* 1998; 2008).

Simon's essay on Thomas Mann is 33 pages in length, double spaced on A-4 sheets. In places there are words crossed out and a correction either typed or handwritten in the space above. Sometimes words, and once a whole sentence, are crossed out as extraneous. On the bottom of one page she added a handwritten sentence, on another page an explanatory sentence was typed at the bottom. In both cases she indicated with an *asterix* (\*) where the addition should be inserted.

In certain instances, and only for the sake of clarity, I have supplied a missing word or an explanatory remark inside square brackets [ ]. Where Simon herself replaced a word, or where she added a phrase or sentence, I have indicated the revision or addition in **bold** print. In the two places where she added a sentence indicated by an *asterix* I have bolded each sentence. I have combined two or more brief paragraphs into one whenever the second or third is a natural extension of the first. The joins are indicated by a + sign.

Lengthy paragraphs have been sub-divided; that is indicated by a # sign where I thought a break most natural. In the last paragraph of the penultimate page there is an inadvertent over-typing of one line, but I have been able to read with certainty the overstruck portion. In only one instance did I discover Simon's use of an English word ("bush") the exact meaning of which in context eluded me until I turned to a lexicon. Since that particular meaning is now obscure in British as well as American English I left the word *in situ* but added an explanatory note in brackets. At the end of the essay is a hand-written postscript by Simon: *Note: Indulgence is requested for the present writer's off-the-cuff translations*. This is a clear indication that she planned a revision of her essay.

The essay itself I subdivided into five parts, indicated by square-bracketed headings, e.g. [*Excursus. Thomas Mann's Use of German*]. Edith Simon may not have approved of my editorial modifications; I beg her pardon *in absentia*. My commentary follows the transcription of Simon's essay, and that in turn is followed by an appendix exploring Arthur Koestler's appraisal of Thomas Mann. That was the result of an exchange of letters followed by an interview of Mann by Koestler in the summer of 1937, a meeting surprisingly overlooked or simply underutilized in the standard literature on the two writers.

Though there is no need to explore it in detail here, there is a thread of European Jewishness that runs through the lives and literary careers of these four individuals. Thomas Mann, though of Lutheran background (his Catholic Brazilian/German mother converted to Lutheranism), married Katherina (Katia) Pringsheim, daughter of a wealthy family of assimilated German Jews. Mann's tetralogy based on the biblical story of Joseph, although intended to be (as much of his writing was) a modern allegory, shows profound interest in the nature of Jewish identity. Completed during WW II and on the eve of the creation of Israel from British Mandate Palestine, it has even more enhanced significance now (see Stern 1966, esp. 245–249). For Mann's alleged anti-Jewish bias in his writing and his personal life see the important new study by Kontje (2008, esp. 119–120).



Edith Simon was the daughter of German Jews who left that country a year before the Nazis were voted into power in late 1932 (Simon returned briefly to complete her *Reifezeugnis*). Koestler was the son of Austrian-Hungarian Jews from Vienna/Budapest. According to a demonstrably hostile biographer (Cesarani 1999), Koestler's career was that of a chronic "homeless mind." Homeless or not, it was an *extraordinary* mind. We must not forget Mann's "sanctioned" or "official" translator between 1926 and 1955, Helen Tracy Lowe-Porter. Though the conventionally Protestant daughter of a Pennsylvania American family, she later (without a distinguished USA "Ivy-League" [= Oxbridge] educational background) moved to Europe, married a Jewish-born British scholar of classics at Oxford (Elias Avery Lowe), and through a series of accidental and contrived events became the sole literary intermediary (for English-only readers) of Thomas Mann for 30 years.

Only Mann, Simon and Koestler were part of the Nazi-induced diaspora of continental Europeans – Jews *and* Gentiles – who relocated either to the U.K. (as did Simon and Koestler, who became British citizens) or to the USA (Mann and his family, who became naturalized Americans). Simon and her family had no political or ideological identity that would have made them a target of Hitler's proscriptions; their Jewishness was a death sentence in and of itself. For Mann it was a combination of factors: his published suspicion of (dating back to 1921), and then his public alarm at (after 1933), the agenda of German National Socialism, and his wife's Jewish identity, forced him into exile. For Koestler it was a similar situation: membership in the anti-fascist German Communist Party from 1931–1938, and his Jewish heritage. He narrowly escaped deportation to the Nazi death camps. Lowe-Porter and her family moved from the UK to the USA before the outbreak of WW II when her husband accepted a faculty position at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ.

I am indebted to the family of Edith Simon, in particular to her daughter Antonia Reeve and Simon's sister Inge Goodwin, for providing a copy of this essay, for help in clarifying certain details about it, and most importantly for permission to publish it. I'm also grateful to *SJC* editor Edward Dąbrowa for encouraging me to find a "home" for Edith's essay in his journal. My thanks also to my university colleague Rose Vydellingum for checking the German transcriptions. Had Edith Simon succeeded in publishing "On Translating Thomas Mann" I'm sure she would have undertaken a thorough revision. She may have expanded its focus to embrace Lowe-Porter's translations of other Mann novels. Whatever shortcomings there may be in any other portion of this article, they are *my* responsibility and not hers.

## Edith Simon, "On Translating Thomas Mann" [c. 1968]

### [Introductory Comments]

*The Magic Mountain* first appeared translated into English in 1928, four years after the original German publication.+ More than forty years passed before there was any suggestion made in public that the English version might be wanting. True, the translator's prefatory note said as much, with handsome humility: but who was there to

endorse her terse disclaimer? The English reader had to take the statement, like the text itself, on trust. He could only read what was laid before him, and there was then no occasion to go into elaborate detail as to precisely in what manner the translation failed.

The book's matter as such quickly proved sufficient to establish it as an international classic. In 1939 the author wrote a special introduction to it in the form of an address to students at the University of Princeton having *The Magic Mountain* on their syllabus. By that time, then, there was occasion to go into detail; and the author did recall that sundry eminent pundits of 1924 had roundly declared "this intensely German novel" forever unsuitable to translation. He mentioned this with ill-disguised if wholly pardonable triumph, but himself had no idea what he was talking about.

For he had to compose his English speech in German, the one language he could handle with absolute command, and it had had to be translated for him to recite. Oh, he could speak and could read English right enough: but he remained unable to apprehend English as a language and culture-medium in its own right.+ How could it have been otherwise, since evidently it took all of forty years for a truly bilingual generation – brought up in an English-speaking environment though of German-speaking descent – to mature and produce its own crop of literary practitioners capable of taking both Shakespeare and Goethe neat and unadulterated, without loss? They of course perceived and could not but mourn the sad loss which the monolingual English reader suffered by *The Magic Mountain* as against *Der Zauberberg*: some went so far as to deplore the very title, which lacks the immediate overtones of enchantment and transmutation adhering to it in German.

This at all events is irrevocable. Names will stick. So much has *The Magic Mountain* become part of the universal literary heritage, that many readers would feel robbed, cheated of the inadequacies which, as it were, make up the novel's familiar face – were those inadequacies to be remedied.+ And indeed they would hardly recognize the thing. The ponderous style, the laborious accumulation of minutiae, which the English reader associates with the author, are utterly at variance with the gliding elegance and significant pointillism of his German performance. The comparison springs to mind, of an Olympic skating champion as against a marathon exponent of the stomping folk dance known as *Schuhplattler*. So would one's heart bleed to see some rustic furniture represented as Chippendale in the catalogues of a credulous foreign nation, even though both articles may provide equally serviceable seating.

The enormous basic differences in syntax are not the only reason. Surely it will not surprise anyone to learn that the lengthy, meandering, laden German sentence can be used with an effect of airy grace as well as one of heavy plodding, in the right hands. So much is a matter of juxtapositions, of delicate contrasts in point of thought and sound, content and form, key and rhythm, ulterior mood and overt expression; careful exactitude in the choice of words and of detail. Neither is it news that a translation must aim at recreating particular effects rather than at verbal accuracy: a knotty problem but by no means insoluble – given perfect understanding on the one hand and commensurate skill on the other. It is only that these qualities have seldom been combined in one translator.

A really comprehensive knowledge of the language in question is not all. There needs to be pretty thorough acquaintance with the whole culture ambiances in question, too – never more necessary than with Thomas Mann. +There has never been a more allusive writer – apart from James Joyce, perhaps, who however did not, like Thomas Mann, confine himself to an existing vocabulary and an *a priori* realistic actuality, distilling requisite surrealist effects from observable, concrete everyday phenomena (as witness the whistling pneumothorax [of Hermine Kleefeld] or the instant recognitions borne on wings of song).

Almost every word, every turn of phrase is loaded with reference, charged, electrified with gamuts of coded meaning and sure-fire triggering devices. Thus the seemingly exhaustive text is very often a form of shorthand writing, the 7[0],000-word tome a kind of microdot. +And this is an important factor. For the emotive and aesthetic essence of art resides in what is circumscribed rather than pinned down: the essence of artistry is leaving out.

The German reader steeped in his own culture gets the message without trying. The English reader must miss out in this respect – unless his pleasure and his concentration were to be vitiated by a supplementary tome, [i.e.] of footnotes. Again, **in principle** nothing is impossible. But it would be a life work to attempt to recreate the same complex structure of pregnant assonances transposed into another medium. The best that can be done, manageably, is to point or underline specially meaningful passages now and then, so as to pick up certain throw-away effects that are too good to evanesce unmarked.

But there is something that need not be absent, a thing particularly commending itself to the English reader: the element of humour. “The irony of Thomas Mann” is well enough attested to have served as a title for [a?] critical work on the subject. Yet how many English aficionados will be aware that this irony comes clad in actual wit, of the merriest sort and with positively dancing light-footedness moreover? [Or] that one of the writer’s foremost characteristics of style is an implicit self-mockery – side by side with that confidential snigger at the expense of the fictional characters, which may bolster up the reader’s complacency concerning his own moral fibre but which is therefore something of a meretricious trick, though dear to many authors and so likewise employed by Thomas Mann.

Since such self-mockery is virtually obligatory in the English-speaking world and indispensable for maximal literary esteem, it is the greatest pity that this should not come across. Here it is just incomplete knowledge of the German language itself under which the *Ur*-translator laboured, rather than initial lack of technical information such as the author finally supplied in the Princeton foreword, which one could wish might have been to hand before ever Mrs. Lowe-Porter embarked on her admittedly gigantic task.

### [On Translating *The Magic Mountain* – Part 1]

One symptom of her unsureness is a curious inability to decide when to be literal and when to depart from the letter. This can be seen in evidence on the novel’s [*The Magic Mountain*’s] first page, even in the opening paragraph. (The opening paragraph,

as everybody knows, is commonly the object of an author's most strained regard, pared and polished over and over within an inch of its life).

Compare then:

Ein einfacher junger Mensch reiste im Hochsommer von Hamburg, seiner Vaterstadt, nach Davos-Platz im Graubündischen. Er fuhr auf Besuch für drei Wochen.

What could be plainer?

An unassuming young man was traveling, in midsummer, from his native city of Hamburg to Davos-Platz in the canton of the Grisons, on a three weeks' visit.

Not so. For a start, *einfach* is not *unassuming*. **Unassuming would be *schlicht*.** *Einfach* equals *simple*, in all the connotations of that word, i.e. plain, uncomplicated, naïve, foolish, guileless, innocent, etc. Although in German it can additionally mean "working class," this latter possibility is excluded by the situation in which the hero is presented to us. That he is generically a hero – *ein simpler* (sic) *Held* as emphasized in the Princeton foreword – becomes immediately clear from the traditional evidence of the opening.

#A translator is presumed to have read the whole book beforehand, and here should be in full possession of the understanding that Hans Castorp – "for that (**not** 'such') was his name" – is a modern incarnation of Parsifal, seeker of the [Holy] Grail, as well as a spiritual kinsman of Young Werther, protagonist of the prototypical *Bildungsroman*. It does not require the author's explicit avowal at Princeton, to tell the informed reader that Wagner and Goethe are quasi-evangelists to Thomas Mann – a factor of utmost importance to any interpretive approach.

A young man without guile traveled in midsummer from Hamburg, his home town, to Davos-Platz in the canton of Graubünden, Switzerland.

The first half of the sentence now is a practically literal rendering, stressing that stark plainness (or simplicity!) of the key signature and vaguely reminiscent of the folk- or fairy-tale. The English atlas has "Graubünden," not the clumsy form of "the" Grisons, and the amendment of "Switzerland" helps to reproduce both the rhythm and gentle humour of the original.

*He was going on a visit, for three weeks.* Why, when there will always be an overall tendency, in English, to break up the looped and knotted German sentence – why add the intended three-weeks' visit as a sub-clause, seeing that the German author made it stand alone, short and tolling as the stroke of a deep-toned bell? He [Hans] was (only) going on a visit, (only) for three weeks: in other words: Yah, that's what he thought. At the end of Chapter II it comes again, still more abrupt: *He went for three weeks.* That makes it official.

To proceed:

Von Hamburg bis dorthinauf, das ist aber eine weite Reise; zu weit eigentlich im Verhältnis zu einem so kurzen Aufenthalt. Es geht durch mehrerer Herren Länder, bergauf und bergab, von der süddeutschen Hochebene hinunter zum Gestade des Schwäbischen Meeres und zu Schiff über seine springenden Wellen hin, dahin über Schlünde, die früher für unergründlich galten.

From Hamburg to Davos is a long journey – too long, indeed, for so brief a stay. It crosses all sorts of country; goes up hill and down dale, descends from the plateau of southern Germany to the shore of Lake Constance, over its bounding waves and on across marshes once thought to be bottomless.

Where is the still lingering echo of *faux naïveté* proper to the continued leitmotif; what has become of the suggestive switchback rhythm of railway travel “up hill and down dale”? Travel by rail is firmly indicated; and here it is needful to remember that the time is pre-1914. Translator’s licence therefore is now in place, to exchange the present tense in which this glorified aside is couched, for the past. For it no longer “is” such a long journey, out of all proportion to the stay envisaged, today when it is known that there are persons who think nothing of commuting between London and New York.

Upon Hans Castorp’s practical mind, inherited from generations of canny merchants ever concerned to get their money’s worth, the notion that “when you care to think of it” (= *eigentlich*), it was too far to go for a mere three weeks, would already be obscurely working: an admirably planted germ of future events. But to retain the punch of its psychological validity for us today, that notion has to be relegated to the past where it belongs.

In a sense, *The Magic Mountain* was what I called a historical novel even in 1924 (as the translator might have noted from the original, shorter foreword), treating of an era already past and a society already changed out of recognition by the First World War which brings the novel, and the spell of Hans Castorp’s seven years’ enchantment, to an end. +Incidentally, the route “spanned several sovereign lands” (a further touch of wide-eyed mock-astonishment), definitely not “all sorts of country.” *Schlünde* are “chasms,” not “marshes” – depths stressed by the plunging vowel which in its sighing repetition *früher für unergründlich* onomatopoeically mimics undulating country followed by the waves of the Swabian Sea alias Lake Constance, i.e. *hin, dahin*.

So perhaps:

But from Hamburg all the way up there – that was far to go, too far really for so brief a stay. One passed through a series of countries, up, up and across the south-German plateau, and down again, down and across Lake Constance with its choppy waves masking chasms that had once been held to be unfathomable.

“Up, up and... down again, down” recreates that *hin, dahin* together with the familiar lilt of travel by rail; and failing [to find?] no fewer than six *ümlauts* with a short *u* thrown in, we can make up the number of correspondingly descending “a”s to almost nine. In any case, “unfathomable” is closer to the writer’s intention that “bottomless,” being the literal translation of *unergründlich* which at that, quite consciously symbolises the unplumbed reaches of the psyche:

Von da an verzettelt sich die Reise, die so lange grosszügig, in direkten Linien vonstatten ging. Es gibt Aufenthalte und Umständlichkeiten. Beim Orte Rorschach, auf schweizerischem Gebiet, vertraut man sich wieder der Eisenbahn, gelangt aber vorderhand nur bis Lanquart, einer kleinen Alpenstation, wo man den Zug zu wechseln gezwungen ist. Es ist eine Schmalspurbahn, die man nach längerem Herumstehen in windiger und wenig reizvoller Gegend besteigt, und in dem Augenblick, wo die kleine, aber offenbar ungewöhnlich zugkräftige Maschine sich in Bewegung setzt, beginnt der eigentlich abenteuerliche Teil der Fahrt, ein jäher und zäher Aufstieg, der nicht enden zu wollen scheint. Denn

Station Lanquart liegt vergleichsweise noch in *mässiger Höhe*; jetzt aber geht es auf wilder, drangvoller Felsenstrasse allen Ernstes ins Hochgebirge.

The chatty, semi-Baedeker style of the foregoing passage is designed not accidental[ly], subservient to the literary device of the “innocent eye” to which all things are fresh and new. It also “proves” the transition of Hans Castorp (frequently referred to as “the plainsman” thereafter) into congenitally alien territory. The blow-by-blow itinerary is a pretext, used with a discernible smile.

This is how it goes (one can hardly say runs) in the authorized [Lowe-Porter] English translation:

At this point the route, which has been so far over trunk-lines, gets cut up. There are stops and formalities. At Rorschach, in Swiss territory, you take train again, but only as far as Lanquart, a small Alpine station, where you have to change. Here, after a long and windy wait in a spot devoid of charm, you mount a narrow-gauge train; and as the small but very powerful engine gets under way, there begins the thrilling part of the journey, a steep and steady climb that seems never to come to an end. For the station of Lanquart lies at a relatively low altitude, but now the wild and rocky route pushes grimly onward into the Alps themselves.

For heaven’s sake! Even on foot the journey would never have been that pedestrian – or no author worth his salt, not to mention champing editors, would have let it stand. This is to write of boredom a great deal too faithfully. +Let’s try something else: *However, at this point the route, hitherto proceeding by leaps and bounds, sank into a slough of petty tedium. There were delays, there was fuss, there was bother.*

# *Verzetteln* is more like “to dissipate,” “to erode,” than “to cut up.” *Grosszügig, in direkten Linien* means actually “by generous sweeps.” The word *Aufenthalt* does service for “halt,” “sojourn,” and “delay” – all three. As there would have been stops aplenty since Hamburg, it is clear which one is meant here. “Formalities” (for *Umständlichkeiten* = “fuss and bother”) Hans Castorp from Hamburg, Germany, would have been used to; and if anything he would rather approve of them, as subsequent flashbacks to his early life abundantly show.

Since the atmospheric purpose of the passage can’t be honored in literal translation, I would be inclined to cut much of the rest, notwithstanding the now pleasing psychiatric associations of *Rorschach*. Obviously the author was beguiled by the quaint names of Rorschach and Lanquart which therefore he desired to share with his readers, but which to the English ear sound no more outlandish and no less than, well, Hamburg and Davos. Otherwise, in English or in German for that matter, it is not really necessary at this point to account for every step:

Forced to change once more at a lone, windy, charmless little Alpine station, one next mounted a narrow-gauge train. But now, the moment the surprisingly high-powered little engine set itself in motion, thrills abounded on its steep, relentless climb that seemed to have no end. Now you knew you were really, seriously in the Alps, the highest altitude of Europe.

This catches the spirit of the original with all of three lines to spare. +The next paragraph settles down to introducing Hans Castorp, largely through a list of his paraphernalia, from which his character and circumstances are limpidly deducible. While the English version has not the casual smoothness of the German, it will serve – except that one misses the amusing implications of the fact that the young hero sports

an *English* book to while away the journey: decidedly a status symbol even though **the subject** falls in his sphere of interest, and manifestly rather heavy going. How would it be if one appended: “in English, with the English title *Ocean Steamships*?” The implications are retrieved. The sly, glancing, dead-pan thrust is back.

The paragraph which follows is significant in that it adumbrates a generalization, of a sort that will increase and multiply, crescendo, throughout the novel. It therefore should be left in the present tense, as it stands. +The German text begins, in effect: *A two day journey constitutes a stark separation for a man’s wonted environment, from all his normal everyday concerns, dues, and prospects – and how much more so for a youngster as yet tenuously rooted in life...*, etc. It does not read: *Two days’ travel separated the youth – he was still too young to have thrust his roots down firmly into life – from his own world, from all that he thought of as his own duties, interests, cares and prospects...* absolutely not!

#As the paragraph continues in the same dogmatic vein, at some length, it makes sense for the ensuing section to corroborate the generalization with an even more leisurely stream of data concerning the particular experience of Hans Castorp. It being the constant object of the author to relate universal truths to a mass of specific, subjective factors, and continually to test them on each other, the distinction between the two should never be allowed to blur.

Unfortunately the English language, incomparably rich in synonyms though it is known to be, has trouble with the word *Man* as denoting species [rather than] gender. It would be awkward to speak of “a human being” in the above passage, let alone of “the young human being” (i.e. see *entfernen den Menschen – und gar den jungen... Menschen*). A host of English humorists from Dickens down has disqualified “the young person” from any serious, objective context: while “human” as a noun belongs in scientific treatises or to the dialogue of non-human creatures in the realm of science fiction. Furthermore, *der junge Mensch* can (and here does) also mean “young fellow;” *menschlich* – Clawdia/Clavdia Chauchat’s pet adjective, is balanced between *human* and *humane*.

While we are on the subject, it would probably be better to render Mme Chauchat’s plangent, slavonic pronunciation of the word (*mänschlich*) as “yuman” – since this squares with occasional phonetic usage – or even “youman,” a spelling which would subtly carry a likely, sympathetic-sensuous thrill for Hans Castorp. “Hu-man,” the choice of Mrs. Lowe-Porter, is a device which she employs indiscriminately for peculiar accents in general (e.g. of Dr. Krokowski), and it simply is not good enough.

### [Excursus: Thomas Mann’s Use of German]

Peculiarities of speech play no inconsiderable part in Thomas Mann’s characterization – Mann and boy, if we may say so-seeing that the tendency was already well-developed in his early [novel] *Buddenbrooks*. +Artistically *Buddenbrooks* is a much more tightly wrought work than any of the later novels – despite the author’s contrary claims for the latter – comparable to, say, *Adam Bede* in relation to *Middlemarch*. The operative difficulties of translation there were not offset by grandeur of design and

subject matter, as happened with *The Magic Mountain*, so that what looks deceptively like just another family chronicle remains comparatively neglected.

What's called "Received Pronunciation" has not the significance in German that it has in English. Grammar rather than accent figure as a mark of social recognition; regional colouration as such being immaterial. In theory the Hamburg accent with its meticulous syllabic purity, of Hans Castorp's uncle-cum-foster-brother James Tienappel, stands for "Received German." But in practice it is considered slightly ridiculous, almost on a par with the accent of Saxony, which reverses "d" and "t" [as well as] "g" and "k," performing similar tortures upon certain vowels, and which represents *the* stock-comic pronunciation.

Now, Dr. Behrens, Rhadamanthus himself, is burdened with a thick Saxon accent which, together with his notable waffling (the verb "to waffle," exact counterpart of *kohlen*, had not yet arrived in 1928 – English being changeable as German is stable even in its slang and idiomatic forms – hence the translator consistently evaded that particular issue) ought to make Behrens a figure of fun. That Behrens (gargoyle rather than cartoon) rises above these liabilities, is a measure of the author's intellectual finesse. Even so, the author is careful to *tell us* about Behrens' accent without actually *reproducing* it in the doctor's spoken dialogue.

With the sinister Krokowski no such scruple was incumbent. Provided grammar and vocabulary are correct, exotically accented German is not lowering either; and Krokowski's command of the language is if anything hyper-literate, with the odd archaic turn of phrase sometimes. Dr. Krokowski's characteristic *Ich gdiesse* (= grüsse) *Sie*, being of that order, might therefore profitably be transposed straight into English, the more as the dental "r" has an equally foreign sound in both languages: "I gdeet Thee" would not be amiss; or at [very] least "Gdeetings!"

Only Settembrini's, the voice of sanity and light, of humanism in its every connotation, is explicitly declared completely accent-free, with an element of foreignness betrayed only in the man's exceeding, orotund fluency. Which is an appropriate moment to mention that *pace* popular belief, the German is generally more inclined to admire than to despise the foreigner. +The point of it all is that Thomas Mann's observation of sound effects adds the literary convention of an "innocent ear" to that of the "innocent eye" – the more as sound-associations perform an important function in his novels. Therefore speech-devices may not be dismissed as gratuitous stage directions, but rather, form vital **components** in the delineation of character, parallel with the physical descriptions. A little extra thought and trouble in finding suitable equivalents is well worth while.

## [On Translating *The Magic Mountain* – Part 2]

Meanwhile here are some further examples where more literal than liberal translation is called for. *Seelenzergliederung*, for instance, Dr. Krokowski's special contribution to the amenities of the sanatorium (as recounted by Joachim to his cousin) should on no account be rendered as "psychoanalysis." In the context of the period-setting, ca. 1907, neither the word nor the practice had yet become commonplace – else



the author with his fine ear for dialogue would have availed himself of the straight noun *Psychoanalyse*. No – neither Joachim nor Hans Castorp from the provinces had ever heard of *that*. In reality, on hearing that Krokowski practiced “psychoanalysis,” Castorp’s only credible reply would have been: “what’s that?,” requiring an interpolated explanation. It is in reaction to the term [*Seelenzergliederung*] as “soul-dissection,” “soul-raking (or -racking),” or possibly “psychical anatomy” that our Guileless Hero cries out: “How revolting!” and promptly goes into hysterics.

Similarly, his mounting hilarity would hardly be stimulated to fresh excess by the information that the local waitresses are known as “dining-room girls.” Even if *Saältöchter* (literally “hall-daughters”) itself may not be as funny as all that either, something like “house-daughters,” “dining-room daughters,” “dining-(room) daughters,” “serving-daughters,” or any other compound preserving the familial portion, would at least offer a reasonable modicum of absurdity to act as an excuse for laughter. A giggling-fit sparked off by anything so unremarkable as “dining-room girls” only feeds the Englishman’s proclivity of regarding foreign characters, in and out of novels, as somewhat below human kinship-level.

Having to “keep a straight face” at Frau Stöhr’s malapropisms is better, and shorter, as well as more accurate (*ohne das Gesicht zu verziehen*), than “take it all without cracking a smile”. Hermine Kleefeld’s whistling appears to Hans Castorp to come out of her *belly* (or *stomach*, or *tum*), not just from her *inside* – or, since it does indeed come from inside her, Joachim would not feel obliged expressly to deny that. The female half of the goatish Russian couple wears a *grubby* (or perhaps *tired*) feather boa, not a positively *soiled* one. It all makes a difference. Every little [bit] helps.

On the young man’s right at breakfast sat *ein unansehnliches Wesen in Schwarz mit flaumigem Teint und matt erhitzten Backen*, i.e. “an insignificant creature (or soul) in black with downy, dully glowing cheeks,” rather than “a plain-looking woman in black, with a dull flush on her cheeks, the sin of which was downy-looking, *as an older person’s often is*.” The words I have put in italics are an emendation entirely off the translator’s own bat, as if to make well and truly sure that a clumsy, halting [English] sentence becomes quite pedantic.

It matters less, I suppose, that the dining hall “was done up in a variant of the contemporary style which managed to leaven functional austerity with a touch of the light fantastic,” rather than “done in that modern style which knows how to give just the right touch of individuality to something in reality very simple;” nor that, to cause a break in the monotony of “There were all kinds of jam (not merely “pots of marmalade”) and honey, basins of..., platters (not “dishes” – **\*unless one made it “great dishes” – the emphasis is on the lavishness of the spread**) of... etc.” The author [Mann] wedged “somebody raised the lid on a weeping Swiss cheese” in between the **barely** listed items, instead of just adding to them with “a Gruyère cheese dropping moisture under a glass bell” as did the translator. But these divergences do show up a lack of familiarity with the respective terms of reference much as can result in graver misreadings elsewhere.

The “English Miss, likewise of mature years” on Hans Castorp’s left, has “bony, chilblained” not “frozen, withered-looking” fingers (without touching her we cannot tell whether they are frozen, while their gnarled appearance is a visible fact); and she is

reading “letters from home in a curvaceous script, drinking blood-coloured tea the while.” Compare [that] with: “She sat reading her home letters, which were written in [a] round hand, and drinking tea the colour of blood.”

#The point about the script is that at the time of composition the vast majority of Germans used a pointed, angular, quasi-Gothic script, many of whose individual letters are quite different from the rounded, “Latin” longhand of other European countries, so that the essential otherness of the Englishwoman’s mail struck Hans Castorp’s goggling eye without any need, or wish, to pry. The author gives an added twist to the description by means of an adjective usually reserved for human bodies – *rundlich* – which corresponds to “curvaceous.” So here, to reproduce the tone of the original, free translation would be more than justified, and I propose “..., immersed in her Britannic mail which she washed down with the blood-coloured tea,” i.e. taking liberties to some purpose.

That whole section [of *The Magic Mountain*] of scene-painting and introductions scintillates with fascinating idiosyncrasies, conjuring up implied case histories and visions of hallucinatory clarity. The last thing it adds up to is fatigue. On the contrary, the imagination boggles in suspense: what next? whatever next? You breathe, instead of feeling moved to groan: “All right, all right – just get *on* with it, Mann!” +Well, let us get on to the climax towards which the chapter has been building up:

Suddenly Hans Castorp jumped with pain and indignation. A door had slammed. It was the one on the left, leading straight into the outer hall. Somebody had let it slam, or even willfully slammed it, a thing he could not abide. He never had been able to tolerate it. Whether by nurture or nature, to him it was a vile offense, and he could have shot anybody who committed it. In the present instance, the door was moreover composed all of separate little pieces of glass, which intensified the shock to his system, with a very flourish of discordance. “Hell and damnation! he raged, how dare you, who are you?” Since, however, at that same moment the ‘seamstress’ addressed a remark to him, he had no time to look and see who was responsible. Still, his blond eyebrows stood rucked in a frown and his face was awry with revulsion as he answered.

This is much closer to the original than

Hans Castorp gave a sudden angry start. A door was slammed – it was the one on the left (etc.) and someone had let it fall shut, or even banged it, a thing he detested; he had never been able to endure it. Whether from his upbringing or out of natural idiosyncrasy, he loathed the slamming of doors, and could have struck the guilty person. In this case, the door was filled above (*obendrian* is not “above” but “moreover”) with small glass panes, which augmented the shock with their rattling and ringing. “Oh, come,” he thought angrily, “what kind of damned carelessness was that?” But at the same time the seamstress addressed him with a remark, and he had no time to see who the transgressor had been. Deep creases furrowed his blond brows, and his face was contorted as he turned to reply to his neighbor.

“Angry” is not the word for what Hans Castorp felt, if we trust the author. It does not approach the loathing and fury with which the grating crash filled the young man; and only short, sharp, clipped **English** phrases can do justice to his instinctive recoil. As for “Oh, come” for *Pfui*, an expression of **extreme** censure and disgust – that is ludicrously feeble. Also, “damned carelessness” hardly meets the case. *Carelessness*, indeed, for *Schlamperei*, the last word in contemptible sloppiness! “**Abominable** bloody-mindedness,” though not exact, might be more like it – especially as Hans

Castorp's over-vehement reaction lays the foundation for his subsequent enslavement to the **culprit**, Mme Chauchat. It is an aspect of that well-known phenomenon, the *Saulus-Paulus* syndrome, that super-heated passion often has its earliest seed in antagonism [or] antipathy.

Hence, too, "How dare you, who are you?" is in the spirit of the original though disregarding the letter. Sticking to the letter is not advisable here, at all. "What kind of..." is too reminiscent of the blustering, caricature German ("What for a...") which invites guffaws with expletives like "pig-dog," "Donner and Blitzen" and so forth. +Taking into account that as late as the [1930s] and beyond some publishers still declined to print the adjective with which Bernard Shaw created a sensation in *Pygmalion*, one can't blame a translator of the twenties for eschewing anything to do with "bloody." Even so, *verdammt* is a sight stronger than colloquial "damned." Neither would "confounded" convey the right impression of blind, shuddering rage in this otherwise mildest of conventional young **men**. A new translation of today [1968?] would have plenty of latitude for rendering his silent apostrophe; but I felt I had in fairness to suggest a form acceptable at the time, and which, had the matter been put to the living author, would I'm sure have got his blessing.

Translating curses and slang in any event raises all sorts of tricky questions. Idiomatic English, as already acknowledged, dates with dangerous speed. So, tackling any save only the most colourless dialogue, the translator always runs a risk of laying up future ridicule upon the characters into whose mouths he puts it and of making them speak anachronistically. Thus, to have Hans Castorp exclaim "Jesus Christ!" or "What fucking bastard did that?" as he might have done fifty years hence, is out of the question for someone like him in the first decade of the century. Who knows but that those might not appear stilted archaisms shortly? In the original language, dialogue dates gracefully, along with the whole: nobody has yet proposed to redo the Bible in the Aramaic and Greek version.

In the German version, it is amazing how accurate Thomas Mann's wonderfully observed, naturalistic dialogue continues to be – barring but a handful of recent coinages all pertaining to things that had no existence when he wrote **and** that could have no conceivable bearing on this novel (any more than aeronautical terms on the works of Thucydides). +By and large, errors and omissions excepted as they say, Mrs. Lowe-Porter did not do badly by Dr. Behrens' highly slang-flavored burst of waffling or burbling, which sends up a colourful smokescreen behind that real climax of the chapter, the portentous banging of the door.

Yet, "Gently does it" or "Oops" would be more like *Achtung, die Herren* than "Take care, gentlemen;" and rather than "Oh, so here you are ... Well, glad to see you," Behrens says "So that's you, is it ... Well, well (or even "Humph"), pleased to meet you." (*So, das sind Sie... na, freut mich*), if we are to get the instant message that there is more to the verbiage than meets the wincing ear. It is a defense mechanism, to salve a hypersensitive dignity, since enabling Behrens subtly to insult the guests to whom he feels himself under contract to pander – note his repeated outbursts later on: "What do you take me for? A lousy pander? A cheap pimp?" and "I only work here!" It helps the artistic unity of a work, if not only vaunted leitmotifs but also unsung motivations are kept well in mind from start to finish.

The description of Behrens also reads anemically, lacking zest. His eyes are blood-shot (**red**) and

What Joachim had said about his cheeks was fully borne out; they were really purple, and set off his head garishly against the white surgeon's coat he wore ... beneath which showed striped trousers and a pair of enormous feet in rather worn yellow laced boots.

No [Not so].

What Joachim had said about his cheeks was no more than the truth: they were blue (Bleu is not "purple:" the latter would be purpurn, violett, or lila, just as in English, [their] spelling apart). Thus his head shone like a flag, red and blue against the white surgeon's coat which just cleared striped trousers above a pair of colossal feet stuck in rather shabby yellow boots. (*Und so wirkte denn sein Kopf recht farbig*, etc.)

Incidentally, *Rottenführer* is not "corporal" but of the order of "swashbuckler," "warlord," [or] *condottiere*. Not even Behrens, not even in jest, would mistake Joachim for NCO material: the comparison is so **inappropriate** as to miss fire. *Schinden* may be literally *to flay*, but in idiomatic usage the exact meaning is *to work* (someone/oneself) *to a frazzle*. *Sorgenkind des Lebens*, on the other hand, is ill-served by "life's little child" if only because *Sorgenkind* is a familiar expression in German. Besides, it doesn't scan well; it is anti-rhythmic. There being no outright equivalent in English, this is not easy; but the expression recurs so frequently, so much like a chord of mood-music, that one should have another go at it. Since Settembrini is the one first to apply it to Castorp, a poetically inflated "Child of sorrows, child of care" would, paradoxically, be less awkward. "Life's tender nursling?" [or] "Tender plant?" [might also be considered].

Another difficulty is "Comrade" on the lips of Dr. Krokowski. *Kamerad* in German is non-political; party-members address one another as *Genosse*. *Kamerad* is like *brother-in-arms* and *fellow-worker*, not to mention *playmate* and **boon companion**; the word also does duty for the cry of surrender, as in *Pax!* Take your choice. +We have Krokow(v)ski and, though Clav(w)dia, not Claudia, we have Hans and Joachim, while *James* Tienappel owns the minor affectation of an English given name; so why is an exception made of Frau (sic) Ziemesen's name, spelled Louise rather than Luise? To be sure this is a petty objection which can't affect the text at all seriously either way. But if we don't strain at a gnat we will swallow the camel in due course: in such a connection as this it is all or nothing.

*Robust und spärlich*, Hans Castorp says of Mynheer Peeperkorn, apologising in the same breath, "though one can't really use those words together." Wherefore it has to be "robust and slight," not "robust and lean" – the latter does not necessarily hold any contradiction. *Gemeinsame Reisekasse* means "joint traveling exchequer," not "luggage in common." *Schwärmerisch* is not "fanatical" but "fervent," "emotional," "impassioned," "enthusiastic." One prefers a sword to have a *hilt* rather than a *handle*. *Bursch* in a military context is an "officer's batman." *Moor* as a racial qualification is not "moor" but "black man," "negro;" the German for English "Moor" is *Maure* (**English "blackamoor" is ruled out by the context**). *Toller Kerl* equals "young devil," not "crazy chap." Settembrini may be a *dago*, but *turkey-cock* does not fit the bill. "Seven-sleeper" for *Siebenschläfer* is at best obscure; an excellent fit is to hand, in the form of

“Rip Van Winkle.” “Oh, dear,” Mme Chauchat says lamely, hearing of Joachim’s death, *O weh* in her minimal German which would scarcely stretch to “woe, alas” even were the latter in character.

### [*The Magic Mountain: Three Elements of Special Consideration*]

There are hundreds more, there are [even] thousands, of such blemishes which distort the infinitely dovetailed fabric of this great work, diminishing it even when its concepts are not actively misconstrued (as also happens sometimes). +Some gaps there are, eliminating a dimension, which one can do little about. The most striking that spring to mind are (1) the name of Hans Castorp’s schoolmate that he had a crush on, Pribislav Hippe; (2) the section-heading *A Soldier, and Brave*, which concludes Chapter VI, and (3) the long analysis of Schubert’s *Lindentree* in the section headed *Fullness of Harmony* in Chapter VII.

[Point 1]: While generally the names of the *dramatis personae* are, as is commonly the case, dictated by the author’s whim, predilections, or personal audio-visual imagery, the name of Hippe is in a class by itself. It is pregnant with stirring assonance, which the author carefully keeps quiet about – a most conspicuous omission in so diligent a milker of semantics as Thomas Mann – the more surely to touch the reader’s subconscious. +It is not a pretty name like Claudia Chauchat, that of the boy’s feminine reincarnation. It has a thin, mean, unprepossessing sound – although of course the “Pribislav” that goes with it, particularly with the odd pronunciation of “r” (again), *Pshibislav*, unmistakably mimics a kiss.

*Hippe* happens to be antiquated German for *scythe*. *Veit Hippe* (*Veit*, like Hans, in olden days equaled “Tom” or “Dick” or “Harry”), also *Freund* (friend) *Hippe*, also known as *der Sensemann* or scythe-man among other by-names, is “Death.” +In German folklore and literature, “Death” as a personalized representation did not go out with the Middle Ages; the practice survived even unto [the] infiltration of colloquial usage. No doubt this was assisted by the fact that normally nouns in the singular retain the article all the time. Thus it has always to be *der Tod*, “the Death” as with “the Devil” (yes, *Der Tod in Venedig* therefore has a somewhat different complexion from *Death in Venice* – the complexion, one may note in passing, of another golden boy!). Death and Devil both, to coin a phrase, are people. Pribislav Hippe is Death deliciously warmed up.

Like it or not, to Thomas Mann the pull of Death and pull of the exotic and the *daimon* of genius and the pangs of secret homosexuality were all mixed up together. The German in him yearned for alien charms, the talent in him would brook no denial, the hermaphrodite element in him, without which no artist is complete, hankered after the remembered sweetness of juvenile eroticism. If one spelled decadence, they all did. They all were abnormal, that is, against nature: so abnormality whether for good or for ill was by definition unhealthy = pathological = lethal. Foreign flesh and spirit thus embodied the heady toxicity of forbidden fruit; genius was disease; and a *femme fatale*, *la belle dame sans merci*, Our Lady Tuberculosis, must necessarily be a crypto-boy.

#Without Hippe,\* no Claudia. \*(As his Christian name and facial structure indicate, [he] is of Slavonic ancestry, like a great many East Prussian and Silesian Germans) +That Hans Castorp's death wish is connected with everything that is disorderly, orgiastic, reprehensible, needs no bush [i.e. special emphasis]: the author proclaims it over and over, in every variety of key and context. The name of Hippe is an extra, gilding the lily. One would shrink from inserting some hint for the benefit of the English reader, where the author refrained from so much as nudging his countrymen. All the same, it is a matter for regret.

Point 2, *A Soldier, and Brave*, falls in another category. The title is a quotation. The line from which it is taken runs: *Ich sterbe als Soldat und brav*; and everybody knows it, just as everybody knows "that is the question" is the remainder of a line beginning "To be or not to be." It comes from Goethe's *Faust*, a work teeming with quotations that have passed into the language, and from which derive also the title and much of the substance of the section called *Walpurgisnacht* at the end of Chapter V. "I die (as) a soldier and brave, etc." are, of course, the last words of Valentine, brother to Marguerite, with whom Hans Castorp will in [the] course of time come to identify the departed Joachim (see the two sections *Fullness of Harmony* and *Highly Questionable*, Chapter VII) – an identification thus economically foreshadowed in the title, and in the title only [*A Soldier and Brave*], of the last part of Chapter VI.

*Ich sterbe als Soldat und brav*: the missing words are automatically filled in by those who know: "I die..." and they are bound to guess that it is Joachim who will die. One may aver that the English reader draws the same conclusion from the title, *A Soldier and* – but no, not *brave*. The title is not just an epitaph with a value judgment in the tail. It contains a prophecy: it is itself a clue to things to come – a pistol on the wall, by Chekhov's dictum, that must and will go off before the play is over.

*Brav*, stemming from French *brave* (brave, gallant, spruce, worthy, honest, good, courageous, smart, fine, etc., etc.) has long since severed any associations with courage, which are monopolised by the adjectives *tapfer* and *mutig*. A child is *brav* not when it takes a fall without a murmur, but when it is generally well-behaved and nice: "good as gold" gives the meaning perfectly. Where *brav* is applied to an adult, the translator will have to talk of "an honest fellow" or "a decent sort." Applied to a soldier, the primary implication is "doing his duty" (as in "England expects...").

Gentle soul that he is, Joachim's courage is an inalienable part of his military ambition and *persona*. It goes without saying; to mention [it] is to belittle it. It is his goodness (as gold) and his sense of duty, discipline, responsibility, which the *brav* of the title celebrates (though perhaps also his comparative stupidity – as there is always a *souçon* of condescension in calling somebody "an honest fellow" or "a decent sort"). Joachim, after all, will rise again in the disembodied form of guardian angel to his weaker cousin.

It's no use going to an English translation of *Faust*. Not only are there several such, but the dying speech of Valentine has never made it as a quotation. We have to cut our losses and drop the allusion. We have to think again. +*A Very Gallant Gentleman, A Soldier and a Gentleman, Military Honours, Bed of Honour, Last Post, Soldier True*, indeed *Parfit Gentil Knight* – any of these would be quite good Thomas Mann in the circumstances. Remember that it is the author's patent intentions and the particular

techniques of the original which are under discussion. You may like, you may prefer, your accustomed *A Soldier, and Brave* – but that does not make it right.

To repeat, the title was conceived as an economy-device, saving link-ups and explanations which the final scenes of gramophone recital and *séance* would otherwise demand. They *are* demanded in an English translation: for without previous knowledge the connection between Joachim and the aria from Gounod's *Faust* seems arbitrary to say the least, **whimsical**, drained of **integral logic**. An able translator should not find it difficult to produce a few appropriate lines in serviceable *pastiche* and so get rid of loose ends which detract from the characters' right to be taken seriously just as if **English were the native tongue**.

Point 3 is the ultimate teaser. +With the analysis of Hans Castorp's responses to Schubert's *Lindentree* (*Lindenbaum*, known also in its domestic-or-utility form as *Am Brunnen vor dem Tore*, from the opening words of the lyric), the author touches on the core of the "intensely German" quality which once caused critics to opine *The Magic Mountain* would not travel [outside German-speaking cultures]. "Touches on?" [Mann] pierces, nails it, splits it open, lays it bare, that nuclear soft centre. Who is to realize that, without prior knowledge of the fundamental constitution of the material?

The purport may be summed up as follows. At that juncture, our "Guileless Hero," our Grail-seeking *reiner Tor* or pure-hearted fool, himself attains to a sophisticated understanding of his nature and his situation. The prolonged psychoanalytical session is concluded and its object is achieved. At that juncture, too, so late in the day, the young man is unexpectedly revealed as a symbol of his nation – or better, a walking, breathing *exposé* of the national character. Prophetically – for Thomas Mann, unlike his mordant left-wing brother Heinrich **who foresaw it all** – was acting spokesman of what he considered one of the most civilized and humane peoples in the world, *das Volk der Dichter und Denker*, and which so considered itself, "the People of Creative Literature and Thought," rather than of [*Blut und Eisen*] "Blood and Iron," a people whose imminent surrender to a Hitler was unthought-of [as well as] unthinkable – prophetically the author stripped the German death-wish of its principal top dressings, sentiment and *Gemütlichkeit*:

Perhaps in its original form it was not in sympathy with death but on the contrary aligned with certain sturdy, life-affirming, positive impulses. The fact remained that in the intellectual approach it became converted into an outright attraction to death. Indisputably all very pious and proper to being with, the end-product belonged in the sphere of darkness. +Oh, rubbish. What nonsense, you say. But you could not have talked him out of it. Morbid yearnings, sinister results. Torturer's mentality and misanthropy dressed up in Spanish black with dignified, starched ruff, with lust in place of love – and all the product of a seeming, artless sensitivity.

#My translation, admittedly unpolished. But Mrs. Lowe-Porter got some of it wrong, [e.g.] "He would not have listened to it from one of you" for *Er hätte es sich von euch nicht ausreden lassen*; etc.) +Well, then, what is "it" all about? "It" is the significance to Hans Castorp himself of that "world of love, of forbidden love" to which *Am Brunnen vor dem Tore* alias *Lindentree* has given him the master-key. +"Arrant madness! So wondrous fair a song! So pure a masterpiece, born of the sacred springs of national feeling: treasure beyond price, truth and beauty incarnate! What

calumny! ... And yet, and yet – beneath the surface loveliness lurked death, corruption.”

Now *Lied* means simply “song.” There has been more everyday singing in Germany than anywhere outside Italy (the deeper, corporate and spiritual wells of song which one associates with Wales, the [River] Don-basin, or [Stephen Foster’s] Ol’ Virginy are of another order). And where the Englishman in his cups may go for old-time music hall ditties, it is a truism that the German at the height of convivial cheerfulness is given to intoning the most lugubrious songs in the traditional repertoire.

#Among these *Am Brunnen vor dem Tore* [At the Well before the Gate] comes second only to *Lorelei*, which is all about death and destruction, while the former is only about homesickness and euphemistic longing for “rest.” It is true that at a certain stage of conviviality [the song] *Daisy, Daisy*, too, may drown in maudlin tears. But the tears will be irrelevant, unattached to what is expressed in the song: a reflex without verbal rationalization. Also, *Daisy* has no claim to artistic merit and does not, in profounder versions, form a staple item of serious concert programmes. *Daisy* is nothing to be proud of, particularly. *Lindentree* is, very much so.

So *Lindentree* could not have been better chosen as a spot for the author to put his finger on an outstanding national tendency. Again, everyone, *but everyone* speaking the German language, knows that song and has it in his bones. His pulse vibrates to the tune, the words are a part of his whole heritage. The least musical and least musically educated German reader gets the drift of Thomas Mann’s expert exposition of the technical-emotional effects. +The force of the musical effects is, however, inseparable from the words which they augment so poignantly. [That] felicitous union is the secret of their **popular** success.

#For this reason it is an error to resort to the standard English translation of the corresponding verse fragments quoted in the original. Obeying the exigencies of rhyme, metre and synchronization, the English words of course are often at variance with what the author picks out precisely to press his case. Thus that “enchanted turn which one hesitates to pin down in bald (not “bold”) words,” as the author says, has a more positive, resolute ring in English than in the German which stresses the nostalgic pull “back” to the sheltering tree; indeed “Ay, onward, ever onward” does the opposite, one would say. “Facing the tempest” (English), too, is not the same as passively suffering the dramatic blast which blows the hat off the narrator’s melancholy head, as the German text has it; and the strictly repetitious German *Ruhe* with its yearning two syllables is not [adequately] replaced by the monosyllabic “rest,” which moreover is varied by “solace” and “peace.” Issuing from the concerned platform, this perhaps does not matter so much.

#But where the object of the exercise does actually lie in tying up harmony and meaning so that they are one, the above is no mere quibble. (By the way, “what for a” translation is it that will put “tenderest flute-tones” for what should be “gossamer *pianissimo*?”) +Either cut the whole passage altogether – which would make nonsense of the novel’s “happy” ending, where Hans Castorp departs into a shrapnel-ridden sunset with that same song on his lips – or, I’d suggest, print the **relevant** stanzas in full before the decisive analysis gets rightly going. For here again the book would benefit by some *pastiche* interpolations, making the English reader *consciously* aware



that the message of the celebrated *Lied* is that escape, in the sense of longing to give up the struggle altogether, represents an admirable urge: that the wish to creep back into the womb bespeaks nothing less than respectable loyalty; and also alluding to its integral position in the hero's culture-code.

#Ideally the passage should be completely recreated in English so as to make the point, as it were, naturally. +Let no one say it can't be done. Of course it could be done. This is what writing is all about – *communication*. No author would wish to have his every word so revered that, rather than render it intelligibly, the translator should leave it inviolate but obscure, blunted, falsified. The old adage holds: that “if a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing properly,” which means making it as nearly perfect as possible. And the line of least resistance never led to that, nor ever will.

**Note: Indulgence is required for the present writer's off-the-cuff translations.**

### Commentary

What follows are some explanatory notes that may help the reader by illuminating some of the background to the creation of Edith Simon's essay, or to better understand a brief allusion by her that she may have enlarged upon if and when the opportunity came to revise it. I claim no expertise in German or European literature in general, or in the literary *oeuvre* of Thomas Mann in particular. Therefore this commentary is selective and brief, and the bibliography assembled in the process of writing it is also of narrow focus and equally compact. I am grateful for friendly assistance to the library staff of the Robbinsville Township Library (especially the Inter-Library Loan personnel), the Institute for Advanced Study, and Princeton Theological Seminary, all in central New Jersey, USA. Coincidentally Thomas Mann and his family were resident in Princeton, in a house owned by the Seminary, from 1938–1941. Mann taught upper-level modern German literature at the University during the academic years 1938–1939, 1939–1940, and early 1941 (Leitch, 1978: 312–313).

***Throughout the commentary L-P refers to Lowe-Porter, ES to Edith Simon, K to Koestler. Mann needs no abbreviation.***

#### *Introductory Comments:*

**“... translated into English in 1928”** – The USA edition (Knopf) appeared in late 1927, followed by the UK edition (Secker & Warberg) in early 1928. “Forty years” from that latter date would be 1968, just two years after L-P's essay “On Translating Thomas Mann” appeared (Thirlwall 1966, 178–209). It is not known whether ES read L-P's essay before writing her own.

**“More than forty years passed before there was any suggestion made in public that the English version might be wanting...”** ES was unaware of the very mild critique (more a cautionary appraisal of the difficulty of Mann's German than of L-P's translations) published by Koch-Emmery (1952–1953). The same might be said of the

comments about L-P in Mandel, 1982 (both articles are described as “weak in their overall assessment of L-P” in Gledhill 1995). The unpublished critique of L-P by Hayes (1974) is stronger. It was not until the acerbic critique of L-P by David Luke (Luke 1970, reprinted 1988; 2008, lix–lxiv) that a full-scale investigation of her credentials as a translator was undertaken.

**“... the translator’s prefatory note”** – L-P introduced herself as Mann’s translator in American and British publications of *The Magic Mountain* in 1927/1928 and in subsequent reprints. It is worth reproducing this in full because so much of the later criticism (dating from the early 1950s but not serious and sustained until the late 1980s) of her translation of that novel, and of all the other Mann translations she undertook, refers back to it:

The translator wishes to thank, in this place, a number of scholars, authorities in the various special fields entered by *The Magic Mountain*, without whose help the version in humility here offered to English readers, lame as it is, must have been more lacking still. That they gave so generously is not to be interpreted otherwise than as a tribute to a work of genius. But with all their help, the great difficulty remained: the violet had to be cast into the crucible, the organic work of art to be remoulded in another tongue. Shelley’s figure is perhaps not entirely apt here. Yet, since in the creative act word and thought are indivisible, the task was seen to be one before which artists would shrink and logical minds recoil.

But of the author of *The Magic Mountain* it can be said in a special sense that he has looked into the seeds of Time. It was indispensable that we should read his book; intolerable that English readers should be barred from a work whose spirit, whatever its vehicle, is universal. It seemed better that an English version should be done ill than not done at all (Mann 1939, “Translator’s Note,” unpaginated; only the first paragraph of this is reprinted in Thirlwall 1966, 15).

The choice of the terms “version,” “remoulded,” and the allusion to [presumably] Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind,” are both salutary and apt in light of ES’s essay published here, and prior/subsequent criticisms (on that see below).

**“... University of Princeton”** – Princeton University invited Mann to teach there, which he did during the academic years 1938 through the early spring of 1941. Mann’s address to Princeton University (which he wrote in German) had to be translated into English before he could read it to his audience. It was printed as a 10-pp. essay “The Making of *The Magic Mountain*” in subsequent editions of that novel (e.g. Mann 1973, 719–729) and as an essay in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Mann 1953). ES appears to be overly harsh here – not so much about L-P’s translation of Mann but rather about Mann himself.

**“Der Zauberberg... to deplore the very title”** – *The Magic Mountain* as the official English title was something of a compromise; Mann himself thought that *The Enchanted Mountain* would be better, and in a letter to L-P [their correspondence was always in their birth language] dated 16 November 1926 he said so (the letter is reproduced in full in Berlin 1992, 307). In French *Der Zauberberg* became *La Montagne Magique*, and in Italian it was rendered *La Montagna Incantata*.

The most recent scholarly edition of the German original of *Der Zauberberg* is, like its 1924 first edition, in two volumes (Mann 2002). The text alone (Vol. 1) is 1076 pages plus another 14 pp. of editor Michael Neumann’s additional comments.

Neumann's *Kommentar* (Vol. 2) is 400 pp., plus another 110 pp. of *Paralipomena* which includes a bibliography of 40 pp. and two indices totaling 44 pp. The most recent English translation of *The Magic Mountain* (Mann 1996 in a single volume) is 706 pp. of very small print. There is no preface or introduction by the translator John E. Woods, no background essay on the translation history of *Der Zauberberg* over its then 70 year literary history, nor even a postscript. Very disappointing to say the least, and in part perhaps the reason why at least one Mann scholar has given it a very lukewarm reception: "Woods" rendering of *The Magic Mountain* (1996) is likewise marred by a variety of major errors" (Buck 2000, 903; see also Buck 1997).

**"... or the instant recognitions borne on wings of song..."** – The vagueness of this allusion could apply to any number of scenes. Interested readers may profit from a broader investigation of the role of classical music (especially, though not exclusively, Mann's fascination with Franz Schubert and Richard Wagner) throughout *The Magic Mountain* in *Passage* (1963).

**"7[0],000-word tome"** – ES's typescript has "7,000 word tome" which appears to be a simple mistake. She seems here to be generalizing and not referring specifically to *The Magic Mountain* (which at 700 pages in the most recent English translation [Woods 1996] is about 350,000 words. The word-number may refer instead to *Death in Venice* which at between 90–140 pages (depending on which English translation (e.g. Mann 1997, 251–343 or Mann 2004, 1–142) is closer to 70,000 words..

**"... a life work to attempt to recreate..."** – L-P managed to translate *The Magic Mountain* in just over a year, an astonishing feat and one that suggests she didn't linger over any difficult passages but instead approached the task in a rather mechanical, methodical, and unimaginative way. It took her a decade (1933–1943) to translate the *Joseph* tetralogy (in segments as Mann produced them), a much more reasonable pace given the size of that monumental work. Even so, Thomas Mann and Alfred Knopf were not happy with what they considered the slow pace of her progress.

**"... the element of humour"** – it says much for ES's own work, in literature (as here) but especially in painting and the plastic arts, that puckish good humor and a sense of literary detachment played a huge part in how she saw the world. Her attraction to Mann's "element of humor" is more than vindicated by one Mann scholar, T.J. Reed. In a single essay he singles out three Mann works in which some element of levity is clear: (1) "It is symptomatic that as significant an event as Europe's 1848 revolutions is treated in an offhand, if beguilingly [*sic*] humourous way" [in *Buddenbrooks*, 1901] (Reed 2002a, 2); or (2) the characterization of Mann's *Royal Highness* (1909) as a "... romantic comedy" [perhaps along the line of G.B. Shaw's *Pygmalion*?] (Reed 2002a, 3); or (3) or the reference to Mann's *Disorder and Early Sorrow* (1925) as "a paradoxically relaxed and good-humoured novella..." (Reed 2002a, 14). Literary critics who see little or no humor in Mann's *oeuvre* include this sweeping but hardly definitive assessment: "... it's hard to imagine a more humorless great writer than [Thomas] Mann" (Cunningham in Mann 2005, xi).

### On Translating *The Magic Mountain* – Part 1

**“The opening paragraph...”** – We might want to compare and contrast (for landscape, mood and character) the entire first chapter (all three segments) of *The Magic Mountain* with the introductory chapter of Thomas Hardy’s *The Return of the Native*, and with the corresponding first chapter of Charlotte Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*.

**“... the original, shorter foreword...”** – the reference is to Mann’s preface to the first German edition of *Der Zauberberg* (two vols. Berlin, Fischer 1924). The latest German edition (Mann 2002) does not reproduce it.

**“... Lanquart, a small Alpine station...”** – ES spells this variously as Lanquart (more often) and Landquart. The German text of *Der Zauberberg* (Mann 2002, 11) has Landquart, but there is a modern Swiss website which renders it Lanquart. It is now a much-in-demand summer campsite for contemporary Alpine vacationers and adventurers.

### Excursus: Thomas Mann’s and German Culture

The cultural matrix, i.e. what constitutes Mann’s *Germanitas* or “German-ness,” into which ES’s short excursus might be set is Chapter 6: “What is German?” in Weigand 1964, 96–139. See also the combined essays by Paul Bishop, “The Intellectual World of Thomas Mann” (Bishop 2002) and Michael Minden, “Mann’s Literary Technique” (Minden 2002). All three overlook the singular, coincidental impact of Arthur Schopenhauer on both Arthur Koestler and Thomas Mann in the spring of 1937; see the *Appendix* to this article. ES is acutely aware of, and appreciative of, Mann’s sense of his cultural identity throughout his sixty-year literary career.

### On Translating *The Magic Mountain* – Part 2

**“... should on no account be rendered as ‘psychoanalysis’...”** – on precisely this point see the cinematic version of *Der Zauberberg*, 1982 (a West German film directed and written by Hans W. Geissendörfer). Inge Simon Goodwin wrote to me that “neither Edith nor I saw [that movie]. Alas, alas, we would have loved to see it but did not know about it” (an e-mail to me of 20 May 2009).

**“... as an older person’s [skin] often is”** – the phrase is L-P’s addition to Mann’s text. Her proclivity to arbitrarily add or subtract words and phrases, as well as rearrange sentence structure (e.g. making subordinate clauses into independent sentences) are all characterizations of her free renditions not only of *Der Zauberberg* but of all the Mann translations she did for Alfred Knopf. A balanced approach to L-P’s translations is offered by Mann scholar Timothy Buck:

“... while at times she seemed like a bungling amateur unable to cope with relatively simple German words and constructions that even a struggling undergraduate might successfully contend with, she would in other, challenging situations sometimes arrive at most apt and *pleasing solutions*...”

(According to Konrad Kellen, Mann's secretary from 1939 to 1943, he [Mann] once remarked: 'She doesn't know German [*Deutsche kann sie nicht*]; but not everyone can be expected to') (Buck 2000, 904).

**"Since Settembrini is the first one to apply [the term *Sorgenkind*] to Castorp..."**

– There is a wry and insightful mention of Settembrini (in relation to Leo Naphta) in Arthur Koestler's recollection of two friends he knew in Paris on the eve of WW II:

We again spent much time together. Unfortunately [Manès] Sperber, who had become an equally close friend, had little in common with [Andor] Németh. Sperber, the Adlerian Marxist, was brilliant, logical, didactic with a touch of the rhetorical; Németh was lazy, dreamy, and enamoured of the absurd. Between the two of them I felt like Hans Castorp in *The Magic Mountain* with his sympathies split between the discursive Settembrini and the pathos of Naphta (Koestler 1969, 504).

**"... the *Saulus-Paulus* syndrome..."** – this term, based on the biblical conversion of Saul of Tarsus to Saint Paul (as related in *The Acts of the Apostles*) was actually a gradual process, beginning with the blinding light on the road to Damascus and concluding with the hearing before Sergius Paullus, the Roman governor of Cyprus during Paul's missionary journey to that island. Certainly the relationship between Hans Castorp and the Russian-born francophone Cláudia Chauchat was also an incremental process, with the latter's prolonged absence from the Davos Sanitarium corresponding to the hiatus between Saul in Damascus and Paul on Cyprus.

**"... Mrs. Lowe-Porter did not do badly by Dr. Behrens' highly slang-favored burst of waffling or burbling ..."** – This parallels Buck's charitable estimation just above (Buck 2000, 904).

**"... if only because *Sorgenkind* [*des Lebens*] is a familiar expression in German..."** We may add to ES's English renditions of this word. In Beddow (2002, 145) it is translated "life's problem child." At the very end of *Der Zauberberg* the narrator intones: *Lebewohl, Hans Castorp, des Lebens treuherziges Sorgenkind!* (Mann 2002, 1085). This is rendered "Farewell, Hans Castorp, life's faithful problem child" in Mann (1995, 706).

### ***The Magic Mountain: Three Elements of Special Consideration***

**"... the pangs of secret homosexuality..."** – ES only alludes to a major aspect of Mann's life, one that (according to his surviving diaries) remained both a distraction and an inspiration until and perhaps beyond age 75. It was not until the diaries were made available to researchers in 1975, and then published over the next 20 years (on this see Reed 2002b, 226–227) that the impact of Mann's *bisexuality* – more accurate than *homosexuality* – gave scholars and the interested reader important insights to Mann's writing (particularly his fiction) and a better understanding of how he repressed the homosexual yearnings within a conventional, heterosexual marriage which lasted 50 years and produced six children (the two oldest of which were homosexual).

There is no need to explore this topic in detail. I reproduce here the general comments of two writers who focus on Mann's struggle with the duality of his desires and what it means for those who wish to see Mann and his *oeuvre* in a more fully three-dimensional setting:

This essay focuses in particular on the sexually troubled character of masculinity and of male-male relationships for Mann. The partly open, partly concealed role of homosexuality in Mann's writing has received considerable attention from recent textual and biographical scholarship, most notably in Anthony Heilbut's recent literary biography, which sees homoerotic passion as the key engine of Mann's life and works from beginning to end. Even critics of a more conservative bent have come to realize that homosexual interests in Mann's work have more than a purely symbolic value. It is certainly the case that for Mann homosexuality tends to be an object of sublimation, rarely rendered in straightforward representational ways, but, if nothing else, its sheer recursive persistence gives it the structure and the substance of real passion (Webber 2002, 65).

Mann's career may be read as a tale of profound erotic disappointment, and its diversion into and projection onto the widest range of disparate subjects... A sympathetic reading of his diaries suggests that fame rarely compensated for the wishes not granted. Youth would always mean the storehouse of his most painful responses. At twenty-six he complained: "Adolescence hangs on with me." He must have wanted it that way; at seventy he declared that one writes "to keep the wound open." ...At least twice he burned his diaries, first at twenty, then in his sixties. In 1950, having confided his latest homosexual infatuation [at age 75], he wonders whether it is time for another fire... (Heilbut 1995, 45).

**"... his mordant left-wing brother Heinrich..."** – Heinrich Mann (1871–1950) was the older brother and intellectual competitor of Thomas throughout their lifetimes. See Hilton (2000) for a brief literary biography of Heinrich.

**"Daisy is nothing to be proud of, particularly"** – It's certainly an antique popular song and one that Thomas Mann surely heard during his long lifetime. It is coincidental but relevant that at about the same time ES was typing those very words of her essay the science fiction epic *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) was being released in cinemas around the world. The culmination of the struggle for control of the spaceship *Discovery* on a secret mission to the planet Jupiter was the termination of all higher brain function of the supercomputer HAL 9000 by the only remaining crew member. As HAL is deliberately "lobotomized" his regressing brain functions take him back to the date (12 January 1997) of his initial programming and to the song with which he was programmed as what I would term a "cognitive default." That song is *Daisy, Daisy* and it lives on in a twilight world of cinema audio trivia and nostalgia (the reason for its inclusion in *Space Odyssey* may be found at the blog <http://kottke.org/06/04/hal-daisy-2001>).

**"This is what writing is all about – communication"** – I'm sure ES was aware of the great burden of any translator of literature – the need to find some common ground in the two languages at hand. That goes beyond the ability to find exact words, phrases and idiomatic expressions in both languages which equate so closely that readers would be unaware of difficulties in the translation. At the *linguistic* level ES found fault in L-P's translation of *Der Zauberberg*, but it is also clear from her essay that she took issue as well with L-P's inability to translate the *cultural* idiom of Thomas Mann. *Gallia in Graecium translata* was a late Roman expression for the idea that Greek

culture had been “transferred” to what is now modern France in ancient times. *Translata* does not mean “superimposed”. It means that the two cultures found a common denominator and that in time a third blended culture might emerge. ES (I think) would agree with this statement:

Good translators (and here they differ from the writers of the original text) agonize over a fundamental question. To what extent should they render, to the best of their ability, the words as written, and to what extent should they reinterpret them to suit the particulars of the language and culture into which they are being conveyed? (Cunningham 2005, viii).

## Conclusion

Edith Simon became known to me in the mid-1950s as the translator of Arthur Koestler’s historical novel *The Gladiators* (1939), a task that I later learned she (with Inge Simon as typist) undertook at age 21 while writing her first novel *The Chosen* (1940) – not to be confused with Chaim Potok’s 1968 novel of the same title. Simon’s novel is a retelling of the biblical *Exodus*, in which she drew inspiration from Thomas Mann’s *Joseph and His Brothers*, the first three volumes of which were published before 1940. During the research for my tribute to Koestler’s birth centenary (Mac-Adam 2006) I made contact with her family in the U.K. Through correspondence with Inge (Simon) Goodwin, and Edith’s daughter Antonia Reeve, I was not only provided with biographical information but also photocopied typescripts of two of her unpublished writings, notably the essay published here.

In her long and productive career Edith Simon – under her birth name – published 17 books (novels and non-fiction), translated one novel (German to English), wrote several film treatments, and created over 900 sketches, paintings and sculptures. It is clear to me that her creative career was equally devoted to writing and art. The emphasis was on writing from the late 1930s until the late 1960s, with a subsequent shift from writing to art from the early 1970s until her death 30 years later. For Simon’s full career see *Edith Simon: Moderation Be Damned!* (Reeve, 2005), especially the biographical first chapter written by her younger sister Inge, herself a novelist and translator. That chapter emphasizes Simon’s intense and parallel interests in creative writing and creative art from the age of 10. It is a career deserving of the volume dedicated to her memory.

At precisely the juncture between those two intense interests she set aside time to write “On Translating Thomas Mann” (and perhaps an unpublished essay in defense of historical fiction?). It is certain (according to her sister) that she never met Mann, but it is equally certain that his published works (particularly *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*) had drawn her attention to his stature in 20<sup>th</sup> century world literature (it is precisely those two novels that Koestler admired). I am also assured by Inge Simon Goodwin that this essay was *not* written for delivery at a symposium or a conference: “I’m sure she would have been delighted to have it published, and she would certainly have corrected it and polished it for that” (e-mail correspondence from Inge Goodwin, 20 May 2009).

It was not until the late 1970s and after that several Mann scholars (Luke 1970;1988; Berlin 1992; Buck 1996) began to systematically and unflinchingly dissect the “English Mann” by comparing and contrasting it with the “German Mann.” The results have been astonishing: the choice of Helen Tracy Lowe-Porter as the “official” translator of Mann can now be seen as the culmination of “a perfect storm” of sometimes bizarre events (the apparent suicide of Mann’s first choice as translator), decisions made counter to the author’s wishes (Alfred Knopf ignored Mann’s repeated misgivings about Lowe-Porter’s credentials and relied instead on his wife’s friendship with her to seal the bargain), and Mann’s increasingly pressing need for a regular income in foreign currency (the German economy imploded in the late 1920s and helped set the scene for the Nazi dismantling of the failing Weimar Republic). Knopf, Lowe-Porter, and Mann were a mutually lucrative literary *troika*.

Thus the timely importance of Simon’s “On Translating Thomas Mann.” Twenty years before academic scholars began to focus systematically on the inaccuracies and distortions and emendations now evident in Lowe-Porter’s renderings of Mann, Simon set out clearly her own sharply critical observations. As readers will note if they compare her comments with those more recently published, there is almost no overlap in discussion. She remains today the only female to take issue with L-P as Mann’s English intermediary. What may have derailed her plans for its publication is the gradual but persistent need to turn her full attention to art, which dominated the second half of her career.

Simon approached *Der Zauberberg* and *The Magic Mountain* from her own unique perspective – that of a Jewish-German refugee who nevertheless saw in Thomas Mann a distillation of the *best* of German culture: a linguistic, literary, mythological, musical, proudly nationalistic tradition that she had been a part of for the first 15 years of her life. That the Nazi era rejected her and her family as “alien” does not come through in this essay. That Mann could not prevent his post-WWI reactions from leaching back into a novel set in the immediate pre-WWI period is not problematical.

Perhaps it is best to end this publication of her essay with some words of her own regarding what was important to her about her time and place in history:

Time and energy are elastic – but not infinitely so. There comes a point where the artist [i.e. of written words or other visual forms] has to choose which to give most of himself to – [i.e] the work as such or the endeavour to build optimal conditions for it... How much of the art of any given age is “great?” Considering the vast increase in populations and their life span, the percentage cannot but diminish sharply as the numbers grow to whom art becomes an accessible occupation. Does that matter? (Simon 2005: Chapter 3, unpaginated).

That her comment ends with a question seems characteristic of her curiosity. Edith Simon seems to have been optimistic all of her life. I can only applaud her consistently positive perspective. The discovery that several carbon-copy typescripts of the novel she translated in 1938 still survive (see the Appendix that follows) presents the possibility of an intriguing *addendum* to the publication of “On Translating Thomas Mann.” If Arthur Koestler’s *The Gladiators* could be published in the original German she once had in hand it would be possible to judge *her* abilities as a translator in somewhat the same way that she critiqued Lowe-Porter. A parallel situation would



obtain if the German original of Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, translated by Daphne Hardy, were found intact.

### Appendix: Arthur Koestler and Thomas Mann

The lives of Arthur Koestler and Thomas Mann intersected briefly in the summer of 1937 in Switzerland. Earlier that year Koestler had been released from a Spanish prison where he awaited a death sentence for his known communist party affiliation and his work as a journalist for the British anti-Fascist *News Chronicle*. It was during that "death row" episode (see Koestler's first account in his *Dialogue with Death*, 1937; 1961) that he reflected on his admiration for the early novels of Thomas Mann, and how much spiritual and intellectual comfort they gave him while imprisoned. Even before returning to London, he wrote to Mann. The most detailed account of this appears in the second volume of Koestler's autobiography, *The Invisible Writing* (1954; 1969):

During the first three weeks of solitary confinement, before I was allowed books from the prison library, my only intellectual nourishment had been the remembrance of books read in the past. In the course of these memory exercises, a certain passage from *Buddenbrooks* came back to me and gave me much spiritual comfort – so much so that at times when I felt particularly dejected, I would have recourse to that scene as it were a pain-soothing pill. The content of the passage, as I remembered it, was this. Consul Thomas Buddenbrook, though only in his late forties, knows that he is about to die. He was never given to any religious or metaphysical speculation, but now he falls under the spell of a book [Arthur Schopenhauer's essay *On Death, and its Relation to the Indestructibility of our Essential Selves*] which for years has stood unread in his library, and in which he finds explained that death is nothing final, merely a transition to another, impersonal form of existence in the All-One...

The day after I was set free, I wrote Thomas Mann a letter (I knew that he lived in Zürich-Kuessnacht) in which I explained [my remembrance of *Buddenbrooks*] and thanked him for the spiritual comfort that I derived from his work. The title of [Schopenhauer's essay] was expressly mentioned in my letter, which was dated from the Rock Hotel, Gibraltar, May 16 or 17, 1937. Thomas Mann's answer reached me a few days later in London. It was a handwritten letter which I lost, together with all my files, on my flight from France in 1940. I cannot, of course, remember its actual text, only its content which, for the sake of simplicity, I shall paraphrase in direct speech:

**Dear Sir:**

**Your letter arrived on May... On the afternoon of that day I was sitting in my garden in Kuessnacht. I had read Schopenhauer's essay in 1897 or 1898, while I was writing *Buddenbrooks*, and I had never read it again as I did not want to weaken its original strong impact on me. On that afternoon, however, I felt a sudden impulse to re-read the essay after nearly forty years. I went indoors to my library to fetch the volume. At that moment the postman rang and brought me your letter... (Koestler 1969, 452–453).**

**[Yours, etc.  
Thomas Mann]**

Koestler then goes on to relate how his interview with Mann later that year (en route to an assignment to the Balkans for the *News Chronicle*) turned into a social disaster for which Koestler took a large share of the blame: “This was no doubt partly due to my paralysing timidity [there is an amusing reference in this recollection to the socially inept malapropisms of Frau Stöhr in *The Magic Mountain*] and *gaucherie* in the master’s presence; on the other hand Mann did nothing to put me at ease” (Koestler 1969, 453–454). That allusion to Mann’s uneasiness regarding the media (even, in Koestler’s case, a *German-speaking* journalist) is hardly unique. In later years Mann was on several occasions impelled to write letters to the editors of journals (particularly the USA based *Time* magazine) to “explain” or “correct” certain statements he had made in the course of interviews. It may be instructive to note the parallel career of Mann’s cultural if not spiritual near-contemporary, German composer Walter Braunfels (1882–1950) – see a report on the revival of his 1920 opera *Die Vögel* (based on Aristophanes’ still relevant satiric comedy *The Birds*) in Tomassini (2009).

What is worth noting here is Koestler’s ambivalent appraisal of Mann, someone he admired for the early novels and non-fiction but found fault with for his seemingly waffling attitude to German political developments before and after 1933, as well as his (Mann’s) later literary output during his prolonged political and cultural exile. This is nearly if not exactly the critique made of Koestler’s own *oeuvre* during his peregrinations (initially prompted by WW II) to the U.K., to Israel, to the U.S.A., to France, and eventually and permanently back to the UK (on that diaspora theme see Cesarani 1999). Since Mann was still alive when this volume of Koestler’s autobiography was published [1954] it may be worth reproducing excerpts from his assessment of Mann’s influence on German (and European) literature of the 20th century. I do not know if Mann might have read this critique of his own career before his death in 1955, and none of the biographies of Mann which I’ve consulted offer any insight:

Since that unhappy meeting, [i.e. between 1937 – c.1953] I have re-read a substantial part of Thomas Mann’s early work. Much of it has lost its original impact on me, but it has retained its grandeur and subtlety, its poetic irony, its universal sweep and range. Most of his later work I find mannered to the point where it becomes unreadable. But *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*, the stories and essays (excluding the political essays), and indeed the major part of his work up to and including the last volume of *Joseph* [published in 1943] remain as a monument of the early twentieth century, and Germany’s most important single contribution to its [twentieth century?] culture. Thus personal disappointment did not diminish my admiration and gratitude for Mann’s work.

It did seem to provide, however, an explanation for a certain aspect of Mann’s art which has always puzzled me: I mean the absence of human kindness. There has perhaps never been a great novelist so completely lacking the Dostoievskian touch of sympathy for the poor and humble. In Mann’s universe, charity is replaced by irony which is sometimes charitable, sometimes not; his attitude to his characters, even at its most sympathetic, has a mark of Olympian condescension... The only exception to this is Mann’s treatment of children and dogs; perhaps because here condescension, the gesture of bending down, is implicit in the situation. The title of his only story about dogs is, revealingly: *Herr und Hund*. Which does not prevent it, however, from being a masterpiece (Koestler 1954, republished 1969, 455–456).

Koestler then moves on to criticism of Mann in political/ideological terms, an assessment not always noted by Mann biographers who either didn’t live through the convoluted era of c. 1930–1945 or who do not see Koestler from the perspective of

a committed communist who eventually lost faith and promoted leftist violence as the correct response to fascism (on this see Bance 2002, 116). It is worth noting that Mann himself expressed such sentiments, although in a very muted way. In his diary entry for 2 March, 1954 Mann wrote that he hoped someone would assassinate U.S. Senator Joseph McCarthy and end the anti-communist witch hunt (which included an FBI file on Mann after he visited East Germany on several occasions) begun by that demagogue in 1949 (Reed 2002a, 15).

Koestler's summary of Mann's literary influence concludes with these thoughts:

The result [of Mann's philosophy through his publications] is a humanism without the cement of affection for the individual human brick, a grandiose, but unsound edifice which was never proof against the nasty gales and currents of the times. This may explain a series of episodes in Mann's public career which were exploited by his opponents and embarrassed his admirers – such as his support of Prussian imperialism in the first World War; his hesitant and belated break with the Nazis; his silent endorsement of the new despotism in Eastern Germany [after 1949], and his acceptance of the Goethe Prize [also in 1949] from a régime which banned and burned the books of his compatriots and fellow-authors...

... They do not affect Mann's greatness as an artist, but they have defeated his claim to the cultural leadership of the German nation. It is impossible to be angry with Picasso for believing that Stalin was the greatest benefactor of mankind, for one feels that his error is the result of a naïve and warmhearted passion. But it is not so easy to forgive the moral faux pas of the ironically dispassionate Olympian (Koestler 1969, 456).

As a coda to this Appendix I might add that Mann's letter to Koestler may still exist. Many of Koestler's typescript books and private papers were taken from his Paris apartment during raids by the anti-communist French police, the *Deuxième Bureau*, between the outbreak of WW II in 1939 and the Nazi occupation of France the following spring. Koestler always believed that these losses were irretrievable. But in e-mail correspondence with Prof. Michael Scammell of Columbia University, I learned that he saw some of this material in what had been the former *KGB* archives in Moscow during a visit there in 1994. The Nazis took to Berlin what they seized in Paris, and in turn the Soviets took the Nazi archives to Moscow after they occupied Berlin in the spring of 1945.

Scammell was particularly eager to discover if the German original typescript of *Darkness at Noon* (published in English translation by Daphne Hardy in 1941) was among Koestler's effects, but found instead *three* original German typescripts of *The Gladiators* (first published in English in 1939). Not realizing that all other copies of the German original of *The Gladiators* had either been lost or discarded, Scammell did not try to obtain a microfilm or photocopy. He failed to find a copy of the German original of *Darkness at Noon*; all copies of it (according to Koestler 1969, 489) were also lost/discarded. I am grateful to Prof. Scammell for sharing this information with me via e-mails between late 2008 and early 2009 (see Scammell 1998, esp. 28 for his visit to the Moscow *KGB* and *Comintern* archives where he discovered a copy of Koestler's two letters of resignation from the German Communist Party).

The irony, of course, is that after WW II both novels were back-translated into German, *The Gladiators* from the translation done by Edith Simon, and *Darkness at Noon* from the translation done by Daphne Hardy (who had fled Paris with Koestler). It

is just possible that Thomas Mann's handwritten letter in reply to Koestler's missive of May, 1937 is still within those Moscow files (or returned to France since the fall of the Soviet Empire). I have tried to make contact with the Directorate of the Russian Federation State Military Archive, so far to no avail. It is also possible that Koestler's letter to Mann still exists, if the latter saved it along with the other correspondence so far published. On the letters of Mann, Alfred Knopf, and Lowe-Porter pertaining to the first English translation of *The Magic Mountain*, see Berlin 1992.

### Postscript

Readers should note that a print format version of John Hayes' *A Method of Determining the Reliability of Literary Translations: Two Versions of Thomas Mann's *Der Tod in Venedig** (Hayes, 1974) is not as readily available as is a microfilm version. I am grateful to the library staff at the University of Maine (Portland) for providing a print copy via Inter-Library Loan to my local public library. The portion of Hayes' study most relevant to this article is "Critical Reception of Lowe-Porter's Translating," pp. 67–77. The rest of the dissertation is focused on Mann's *Death in Venice*.

While this article was in press Michael Scammell of Columbia University kindly brought to my attention Christian Buckard's *Arthur Koestler: Ein Extremes Leben (1905–1983)* (München, C.H. Beck, 2004). *Strictu sensu* this is *not* a biography of Koestler, but Buckard devoted three pages (140–143) to the Koestler-Mann episode described in the Appendix above. Koestler's letter to Mann is in Mann's archive. Buckard reproduced all of it but the date and greeting (141–142), as well as Mann's diary entry regarding it of 23 May 1937 (142). Mann's reply to Koestler is still missing.

My thanks to Prof. Scammell for his gracious assistance in this and several other matters during the preparation of this article. His own extensive and perhaps definitive biography *Koestler: The Literary and Political Odyssey of a Twentieth Century Sceptic* will be published in January 2010 by Random House in the USA and by Faber & Faber in the UK. Grateful thanks also to Brent Shaw of Princeton University for making Buckard's volume available to me at short notice, and for patiently letting me expound on the subject of this essay in person over lunch, and via e-mail correspondence.

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Monika Stepień

***ES GIBT KEINE FLUCHT VOR DEN EIGENEN WURZELN***

**Biographische Erzählung von Hela Fisher vor dem Hintergrund der Rückkehr zum Geburtsort und zu den eigenen Wurzeln**

Mein „Baby,“ das ich über zweiundzwanzig Jahre lang fleißig gezeugt habe, hat endlich das Tageslicht erblickt.<sup>1</sup> So definiert Hela Fisher das Zupapierbringen ihrer biographischen Erfahrungen, das ein Teil der Arbeit an ihrer Autobiographie war. Die Schreibmaschine wurde versteckt, der Entstehungsort aufgeräumt. Das Einzige, was noch blieb, um die Biographie zu Ende bringen zu können und damit den Kreis zu schließen, ist die Polenreise.

Das Verhalten dieser Art ist denjenigen Menschen in dem Herbst ihres Lebens sehr ähnlich, die eine schwierige Vergangenheit hinter sich haben, und die sich auf einer bestimmten Lebensetappe bemühen, sie in Ordnung zu bringen. Das Prozess der biographischen Arbeit<sup>2</sup> und der damit verbundene Rückkehrprozess<sup>3</sup> zu den biographisch wichtigen Orten, wurden ausführlich von Dr. Kaja Kaźmierska in dem Buch mit dem Titel „Biographie und Erinnerung“ beschrieben. Am Beispiel der Generationserfahrung der vor der Ausrottung Geretteten unterscheidet die Autorin bestimmte Stadien des Rückkehrprozesses. Das Erste Stadium ist der Beginn der Erzählung von dem eigenen Schicksal. Im Fall Hela Fisher nimmt die Geschichte ihren Anfang Mitte der siebziger Jahre. Zum Niederschreiben ihrer Erinnerungen wurde Hela Fisher von ihren Freunden motiviert.

Es wäre Schade, denn solche Erzählungen in Vergessenheit geraten würden. Beschreibe all das, was in den Tagen dir geschah. Von Konzentrationslagern, Menschenmord und Massaker weiß man schon viel. Aber von dem grauen Alltag und von den Taten guter Menschen unter der Besatzung wurde nur wenig geschrieben.<sup>4</sup>

Aus diesem Grund hat sie sich zu schreiben entschlossen: „Ich habe angefangen in meinen Erinnerungen zu graben. Bis ich endlich an einen Punkt agelange, wo ich plötzlich noch einmal Krakau sehen wollte.“<sup>5</sup> Eben diese Stadt wurde zur Bühne, auf der sich viele Kriegserfahrungen der Autorin abgespielt haben. Die Erinnerungen an die Erfahrungen gaben den Anfang dem Entstehungsprozess ihrer Biographie. Nach Krakau kam sie im Herbst 1942, nachdem sie das Lemberger Ghetto verlassen hatte. Hier lebte sie mit den arischen Papieren, was sie bunt und lebendig in ihren

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<sup>1</sup> H. Fisher: *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni (Es gibt keine Flucht vor den eigenen Wurzeln)* III, Plotkies, Nr. 32 (<http://webnews.textalk.com/plotkies/>).

<sup>2</sup> Vgl. K. Kaźmierska: *Biografia i pamięć. Na przykładzie pokoleniowego doświadczenia ocalonych z Zagłady*, Kraków 2008, S. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Vgl. Ebd., S. 13.

<sup>4</sup> H. Fisher: *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni*, II, Plotkies, Nr. 31 (<http://webnews.textalk.com/plotkies/>).

<sup>5</sup> Ebd.

Erinnerungen beschrieb. Sie erzählte von dem Alltag auf der arischen Seite von Krakau. Es gibt nicht viele Zeugnisse dieser Art. Sie beschrieb eine von Angst und Unsicherheit gezeichnete Existenz, ein Leben, das einen Überlebenskampf ohne Waffe bedeutete. Als Waffe in diesem Kampf dienten Dokumente, die die Autorin auf einem legalen Weg erlangte, was nur wenigen gelang. Eine enorme Bedeutung hatte natürlich die Unterstützung hilfsbereiter Menschen, unter denen Hela Fisher – damals Wanda Raczyńska – ihren Betreuer und den zukünftigen Ehemann, Tadeusz Bereźnicki, gefunden hat. Krakau assoziierte die Autorin jedoch nicht nur mit dem Krieg. Die Befreiung erreichte diese Stadt, als sie traurig und abgestumpft, nicht mehr fähig, sich über die Freiheit zu freuen, gleichgültig auf die unordentlich von den deutschen gelassenen und jetzt geplünderten Magazine schaute und die durch die Strassen stolzierenden sowjetischen Soldaten beobachtete. Sie blieb. Sie hatte Tadeusz, den sie bald heiratete. Sie verließ die Stadt und Polen nicht, nicht einmal nach dem Pogrom in Kielce, als ihr wiedergefundener Bruder Misza nach Israel ging. Sie blieb in dem Land, das sie für ihre erste Heimat hielt, doch sie verbarg ihre Identität. Sie fuhr erst nach dem Zerfall ihrer Ehe infolge des politischen Wandels im Jahre 1956 weg. Beinahe zwanzig Jahre später, als sie ihre Erinnerungen niederschrieb, verspürte sie den Wunsch, zurückzukehren – nach Krakau – zu dem Ort, wo die schlechten Erinnerungen so geballt waren. Die Erinnerungen an den Krieg und an die Trennung von ihrem Betreuer aus der Besatzungszeit und Mann. „Nach Polen habe ich mich nicht geseht – schreibt sie. Ich wollte Krakau wiedersehen und noch mehr einige seiner Bewohner, mit denen ich seinerzeit stark verbunden war.“<sup>6</sup> In der Arbeit an ihrer Autobiographie begann Hela Fischer auf diese Weise die zweite, von Kaźmierska beschriebene Etappe – das Abfinden mit dem Gedanken, nach Polen zu reisen. Dieses Abfinden dauerte mehrere Jahre und wurde von vielen Faktoren bedingt. Der erste war der Abbruch der diplomatischen Beziehungen zwischen Israel und den kommunistischen Ländern. Von der Fahrt nach Polen konnte nicht die Rede sein. Nicht einmal die Briefe, welche die Autorin nach Polen schickte, wurden beantwortet. In der Zwischenzeit ist ihr zweiter Mann, Arie Litwak verstorben, mit dem sie fünfzehn Jahre lang zusammenlebte. Auch ein Freund, der sie zum Schreiben ermutigte, starb. Die Erinnerungen kamen für einige Zeit in die Schublade. Auch der Gedanke an die Reise nach Polen rückte weiter. 1983 kam der Durchbruch. Anlässlich des 40ten Jahrestages des Aufstandes im Warschauer Ghetto flogen die seit langer Zeit ersten Ausflüge aus Israel nach Polen. Eine Teilnehmerin war eine Bekannte von Hela, die nach der Rückkehr aus Polen enthusiastisch wirkte. „Ich habe allen erzählt, dass ich sehr gerne nach Polen reisen möchte, doch ich habe auch nichts in diese Richtung unternommen. (...) – bemerkt die Autorin. Dieser Entschluss musste in mir reifen. (...) Eines Tages stellte ich fest, das ich mir nichts mehr wünsche, als meinen Plan zu verwirklichen.“<sup>7</sup> Anders ausgedrückt erfuhr Hela Fisher den biographischen Zwang,<sup>8</sup> den Kaźmierska als den Impuls betrachtet, der zu der Entscheidung über die Reise führt. Auf diese Art und Weise schloss Hela Fisher die dritte Etappe des Rückkehrprozesses ab. Die letzte Etappe

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<sup>6</sup> Ebd.

<sup>7</sup> Ebd.

<sup>8</sup> Vgl. K. Kaźmierska, op. cit., S. 48.



konnte nur noch die Reise selbst sein. Im Fall Hela Fisher fand diese 1987 statt. Die Autorin brauchte viel Zeit, um ihren dritten Mann, Ryszard Lewin davon zu überzeugen, dass sie nach Polen fahren sollten:

Ich habe ihm gesagt, er habe keine Besatzung in Polen überlebt. Er sei nicht im Stande zu begreifen, wie wichtig mir das ist, nach so vielen Jahren Erniedrigung mit gleichen Rechten wie jeder andere nach Polen reisen zu dürfen. Sich nicht verstecken zu müssen und darauf stolz sein zu dürfen, dass ich aus Israel komme. Er verstehe nicht, wie sehr ich diejenigen treffen will, die mir so viel Herz während des Krieges erwiesen haben, und diejenigen, mit denen es mir gut ging nachdem ich Tadek verloren hatte und ganz alleine blieb. Ich sei dorthin von einer Kraft angezogen, die ich weder überwinden, noch verstehen kann.<sup>9</sup>

Man muss zugeben, dass derartige Motivation bei der Erinnerungsliteratur selten vorkommt. Die Entscheidung über die Rückkehr entspricht meistens dem Willen, der Familie zu gedenken und die Herkunftsorte zu besuchen. Doch Hela Fisher entschied sich in der ersten Reihe für die Rückkehr nach Krakau, der Stadt, wo sie ihre Identität verbergen musste und nicht nach Równe, woher sie kam. Es war die Frage des Stolzes und der Ehre, nach Polen als ein freier Mensch zu kommen, als ein Mensch, der keine Angst mehr zu haben braucht, der er selber sein kann. Es war ihr sehr wichtig, ihren Freunden die ganze Wahrheit über ihre Herkunft zu offenbaren. Ihre Identität war jetzt definiert. Sie bezeichnete sich selbst als Israelin. Sie lernte das Land ihrer Vorfahren lieben, obwohl sie doch nach dem Krieg gar nicht nach Israel ausreisen wollte. Sie erfuhr einen Wandel, der sich bei einer der ersten Unabhängigkeitsfeiern, die sie in Israel erlebte, einstellte. Ab diesem Moment fühlte sie sich in Israel wie zu Hause, und von dieser Zeit an pflegte sie diese Überzeugung und die Liebe zur neuen Heimat. Die Welle des Patriotismus kam mit dem 6-Tage-Krieg und dauerte bis zum Jom-Kippur-Krieg an. Die Autorin war sozial tätig. Sie bereitete das Essen für die Soldaten zu, half jahrelang den neuen Ansiedlern. Nicht ohne Einfluss auf die Erinnerung von Hela Fischer blieb bestimmt die Kollektiverinnerung der Israelis, die jahrelang die Tragödie des Holocausts zu verdrängen versuchten und ein neues Judenmodell propagierten – das Modell eines starken, sein Land liebenden Juden. Als eine neue, verwandelte Israelin wollte die Autorin Polen besuchen.

Ich habe angefangen, mir vorzustellen, wie wir nach Polen fahren und in Polen ankommen. – erinnert sie sich. Wie viele Gedanken kamen mir dazu, wie viele schlaflose Nächte (...). Ich habe mich in verschiedenen Situationen gesehen. Wie eine Königin in einer Kutsche mit weißen Pferden komme ich in Krakau an. Ich habe gesehen, wie ich Irka und Nela begrüße und weine (...) von den Eindrücken überwältigt. Ich habe phantasiert, wie ich Jagoda und Wacek stolz über meine wahre Herkunft erzähle (...)<sup>10</sup>.

Endlich war es an der Zeit, die Träume mit der Wirklichkeit zu konfrontieren.

Wir sind in Krakau gelandet. Die Stadt der ich in der letzten Zeit so viele Gedanken gewidmet habe, die ich so sehr besuchen wollte (...) liegt vor meinen Füßen. (...) Aber was ist mit mir los? (...) Ich spüre wie ich steif werde, wie alles in mir abstirbt. Als hätte ich eine Betäubungsspritze bekommen. Von überall spüre ich eine bittere Kälte. Meine Hände werden nass, mir ist kalt und mein Mund ist

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<sup>9</sup> H. Fisher, *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni*, II.

<sup>10</sup> Ebd.

trocken (...). Alle Träume, alle Gedanken zunichte gemacht. (...) Ich spüre mal wieder die alte Angst und dieselben alten Komplexe (...). Ich entpuppe mich als ein Feigling, gewöhnlicher Feigling.<sup>11</sup>

Auf diese Weise wurde die Rückkehr nach Krakau zu einem sehr negativem Erlebnis. Die Emotionen wurden von den somatischen Erscheinungen der tiefen psychischen Erschütterung begleitet. Die Autorin brachte es nicht über sich, ehrlich, wie sie sich das erträumt hatte, zu sein. Sie war enttäuscht von sich selbst, was sie bei der Niederschrift ihrer Erinnerungen zu Papier brachte. Alle Freunde haben sie warm und herzlich angenommen, doch ihr fehlte der Mut, ihnen die Wahrheit zu sagen. Sie wollte deswegen mindestens den Krakauer Raum wiedererkennen, das in ihrer Erinnerung aufbewahrte Stadtbild mit der Wirklichkeit der späten achtziger Jahre vergleichen.

Zwar habe ich die gleichen Ziegelhäuser und Gebäuden gesehen, die selbe Melodie wurde jede Stunde von dem Turm der Marienkirche gespielt. Doch es war nicht das selbe Krakau. (...) Der wahre Besuch in Krakau begann erst, als ich alleine mit Rysiek [Ehemann] auf die Straßen der Stadt gegangen bin. (...) Wir gingen wie Pilger über einen Kreuzweg, die vor jeder Station Halt machen.<sup>12</sup>

Es gab Erinnerungsorte (*lieux de memoire*<sup>13</sup>), doch es gab nur wenige Menschen, die die Erinnerung aufbewahrten (*milieu de memoire*<sup>14</sup>). All das rief ein Leeregefühl hervor. Die Stadt war grau und traurig. Ganz anders als die Stadt, die die Autorin aus ihrer Jugend kannte. Ihre Beschreibung musste deswegen als Kontrast verfasst werden. Die Autorin besuchte nicht ihr altes Haus, traf sich nicht mit ihrem früheren Ehemann. Zu dem Treffen mit dem Letzteren kam es erst bei dem nächsten Besuch von Hela Fisher in Krakau im Jahre 1989. „Doch dieses Treffen hatte für mich keine Bedeutung – erwähnt sie. Ich war weder besonders bewegt noch erregt.“<sup>15</sup> Sowohl bei der Reise, als auch bei dem Treffen wurde die Autorin von ihrem Mann, Ryszard begleitet. Die Begleitung der Nächsten während einer Reise nach Polen ist ein charakteristisches Element des Rückkehrprozesses. Die Nächsten begleiten die Zurückkehrenden an ihren biographischen Orten, aber auch an den Tötungsorten der Juden und Polen, die gewöhnlich auf dem Ausflugsplan stehen. So war es auch im Fall Hela Fisher. Ihr Ehemann war bei ihr während der Fahrt nach Oświęcim. Für die Autorin war es ein traumatisches Erlebnis.

Uns wurde vorgeschlagen, dass jemand aus unserer Gruppe Kaddisch betet (...). Ich habe das nicht ausgehalten. (...) Ich habe losgeheult (...). Ich war bei dem Begräbnis der mir Teuersten und Nächsten. Den Eindruck hatte ich (...). Nach einigen Tagen begriff ich, dass ich es brauchte. Das drängte mich nach Polen. Ich war erleichtert.<sup>16</sup>

In einem gewissen Sinne kam es hier zu dem *Biographieabschluss*.<sup>17</sup> Das Leben hat einen Kreis geschlagen. Es erfolgte die Rückkehr zu den Jugendorten und zu den Todesorten, deren Besuch stark emotionsgeladen war. Das Biographieabschlussprozess wäre aber nicht vollendet, ohne die Rückkehr zu dem Geburtsort, zu dem Ort, der mit

<sup>11</sup> Ebd.

<sup>12</sup> Ebd.

<sup>13</sup> Vgl. K. Kaźmierska, op. cit., S. 79–80.

<sup>14</sup> Vgl. Ebd., S. 151.

<sup>15</sup> H. Fisher, *Nie ma ucieczki od korzeni*, II.

<sup>16</sup> Ebd.

<sup>17</sup> Vgl. K. Kaźmierska, op. cit., 14–15.

guten Erinnerungen verbunden ist. Für Hela Fisher war Równe in Wołyń so ein Ort. Sie fuhr dorthin mit einer Schulkameradin. Sie betont, dass sie mit niemandem anderen den Mut gefasst hätte, dies zu tun. Mal wieder tauchte das Motiv der Begleitung der Nächsten in dem Rückkehrprozess auf. Vor der Reise vertiefte sich Hela Fischer wieder in ihre Gedanken: „Ich konnte es kaum glauben, dass ich bald die Stadt meiner Jugend sehe, das Haus, wo ich geboren wurde.“<sup>18</sup> Wie war das Haus? Groß, gepflegt, mit einem Garten. Das Textilgeschäft des Vaters, Dawid prosperierte bestens, so dass es der fünfköpfigen Familie gut ging. Die Autorin schreibt von sich selbst, dass sie ein Kind des Wohlstandes war. Sie kam eher spät auf die Welt. Der Bruder Misza war 12, die Schwester Raja 14 Jahre älter. Die Jüngste, Hela, eigentlich Gela wurde von einer katholischen Betreuerin erzogen. Den Namen hat ihr die Klassenlehrerin verändert, in deren Obhut sie sich in dem polnischen Kindergarten für jüdische Kinder befand. Die Lehrerin war der Meinung, dass der Name *Gela* russisch klingt. Trotz der guten Lebensbedingungen, der Liebe, die sie von den Eltern und den Geschwistern bekam, war sie ein innerlich unruhiges Kind.

Ich habe es immer beklagt, als Jüdin geboren zu sein. Ab den jüngsten Jahren bedrückte mich die Tatsache. Von den Zeiten angefangen, als ich zusammen mit meiner Mutter in die Sommerferien nach Krynica oder in einen anderen Kurort gefahren bin und den polnischen Kindern beim Spielen zuschaute. Ich war traurig, dass ich nicht eines von ihnen bin, und dass ich der Gruppe nicht angehöre. (...) Neidisch habe ich manchmal die Figuren der Gottesmutter angeschaut. Ich war neidisch auf die Ehre, die ihr gegeben wurde. In der Innere meines Herzens wollte ich sie auch anbeten dürfen, eine von denen sein, deren das erlaubt ist.<sup>19</sup>

Die Eltern wollten Hela in eine jüdische Schule schicken. Sie hat entschieden widersprochen und erkämpfte sich eine polnische Schule. Dort lieh sie sich von einer Freundin ein Medaillon, um es mindestens einige Zeit tragen zu dürfen und so den anderen Kindern ähnlicher zu werden. Nicht damit gewann sie jedoch ihre Sympathie. Freundinnen und Freunde spielten mit Vergnügen in dem schönen Hausgarten der Fisher. Im Winter hielten sich die Kinder in einem großen Salon mit fünf großen Buntglasfenstern auf. Kinderspiele wurden in den späteren Jahren durch die Tanzbegeisterung ersetzt. Die Autorin erwähnt auch frostige Winter, in denen sie Schlittschuh laufen konnten und heiße Sommer, in denen sie im Boot schwimmen konnten. Zu diesem Równe aus ihrer Erinnerung wollte sie zurückkehren, doch sie wusste zugleich, das es unmöglich war: „Ich wusste genau, dass das was ich zu sehen bekomme, wird nicht das sein, was ich sehen möchte, und doch zog mich etwas dorthin“<sup>20</sup> – erinnert sie sich. Den nach der Rückkehr niedergeschriebenen Erinnerungsteil hat sie „Treffen mit der Vergangenheit. Równe – Fremdenstadt“ betitelt. Selbstverständlich war der Titel nicht zufällig. Als sie Mitte der neunziger Jahre durch die Straßen ihrer Stadt der Kindheit spazierte, schaute sie sich nach bekannten Gebäuden um. In Równe gab es keine Juden mehr. Die Autorin versuchte also mindestens die festen Raumelemente wiederzuerkennen. Meistens ohne Erfolg. „Wir gehen die Fochstraße entlang – schreibt sie. Es gibt kaum welche bekannten

<sup>18</sup> H. Fisher, *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni*, III.

<sup>19</sup> H. Fisher, *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni*, I. *Plotkies*, Nr. 30.

<sup>20</sup> H. Fisher, *Nie ma uciezki od korzeni*, III.

Häuser. Wir erreichen die Litewskastraße – alles abgerissen.“<sup>21</sup> Es fehlte also nicht nur an *milieu*, sondern auch an *lieux de memoire*. Doch sie hat ihr Haus gefunden, in dem jetzt ein Getreidelager eingerichtet wurde, dessen Arbeiter sie freundlich empfangen haben. Sie wurde nicht wie eine Fremde oder wie ein Feind behandelt, was so oft vorkommt. Man kann die Rolle der lokalen Gesellschaft bei der Gestaltung der Rückkehrerfahrung nicht unterschätzen. Im Fall Hela Fisher war es eine zwiespältige Rolle. Einerseits wurde die Autorin herzlich empfangen, was die negativen Empfindungen bei der Betrachtung des umgebauten Hauses gemildert hat, andererseits ließ sich in der Luft der Alkoholgeruch spüren und die besondere Höflichkeit der Arbeiter wirkte auf die Autorin unnatürlich. Ihre Aufmerksamkeit haben vor allem die Veränderungen in dem jeweils bekannten Raum angezogen, die die Identifizierung mit dem Ort, als dem Haus der Kindheit erschwert haben:

Der schöne Salon in ein Labor verwandelt (...) Andere Zimmer getrennt, manche zugesperrt, umgebaute Fenster und Türe. Die schönen Buntglasfenster, damals unser ganzer Stolz gab es nur noch in meiner Erinnerung. (...) Doch ich erkenne in einer Ecke zwischen unserer früheren Küche und Toilette einen Fleck unseres alten Fußbodens. (...) Etwas ergriff mein Herz.<sup>22</sup>

Diese kurze Erinnerung, von einer greifbaren Vergangenheitsspur bestätigt, hat jedoch nichts geändert: *Ein fremdes Haus – es hat mich nicht sehr beeindruckt. Ohne Reue und Nostalgie habe ich den Ort verlassen.*<sup>23</sup> Viel stärkere Emotionen erweckte in der Autorin der Besuch in Zdobunów, dem Ort, wo symbolisch mit einem Denkmal der Mord an den Juden, auch an ihren Eltern, verewigt wurde. Hela Fisher schreibt:

Die alten großen Bäume raschelten, der Wind umhauchte leicht unsere Gesichter. Ich und Musia [eine Freundin der Autorin] standen aneinander gelehnt, zitternd und weinend. Das waren unsere Gräber.<sup>24</sup>

Die Formulierung *unsere* Gräber kann verschiedentlich gedeutet werden. In der einfachsten Deutung handelt es sich natürlich um die Gräber *unserer* Nächsten. In Wirklichkeit aber bedeutet es die Identifizierung mit dem Ort, der für die Biographie der Autorin von größter Bedeutung ist. Eben hier in einer gewissen Masse ruht ein Teil von ihr selbst – der Teil, der zusammen mit den Nächsten gestorben ist. Hela Fisher kam, um diesen Teil von sich selbst zu verabschieden, gemeinsam mit denjenigen, die sie liebte. Doch war das nicht der einzige mit der Erinnerung an die ermordete Familie verbundene Ort, den sie während der Reise besuchte. Der nächste Ort war Brzuchowice, wo ihre Schwester, ihr Neffe und ihre Nichte getötet wurden. An diesem Ort kam es zu einer schmerzhaften Konfrontation der jüdischen mit der ukrainischen Erinnerung und damit der individuellen Erinnerung mit der Kollektiverinnerung. Die Autorin beschreibt es so:

Naiv war ich mir sicher, dass ich in Brzuchowice von jedem, den ich frage, erfahren werde, wo im Juni 1943 die Juden erschossen wurden. Es hat sich gezeigt, dass es keiner wusste.<sup>25</sup>

Schon wieder fehlte es an den Menschen – den lebendigen Erinnerungsträgern. Die

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<sup>21</sup> Ebd.

<sup>22</sup> Ebd.

<sup>23</sup> Ebd.

<sup>24</sup> Ebd.

<sup>25</sup> Ebd.

Autorin gab sich ein Versprechen, in die Familienstadt zurückzukehren. Heute ist sie sich gewiss, dass sie es wegen ihres Gesundheitszustandes niemals schaffen wird<sup>26</sup>. Sie hat aber für immer die Bilder aus der Kindheit in ihrer Erinnerung behalten. Indem sie jene mit der Gegenwart vergleicht, schreibt sie:

Heute ist Równe für uns eine fremde Stadt. Andere Menschen, andere Sprache, andere Straßen. Hier und da erinnert etwas an die frühere Stadt, doch das ist nicht das selbe. Nur fremde Gesichter.<sup>27</sup>

Die Rückkehr zu dem Geburtsort erwies sich als schmerzvoller Biographieabschluss, doch für die Autorin umso wichtiger. *Ich war zufrieden, dass ich es noch geschafft habe, meine Eltern zu besuchen – schreibt sie. Vier Wochen lang (nach der Rückfahrt) habe ich mich um nichts geschert [...]. Meistens lag ich einfach und sah in meiner Erinnerung die großen Bäume, hörte das Rascheln in ihren Ästen und betrachtete das monumentale Denkmal.*<sup>28</sup>

Die Rückkehr zu ihrem Geburtsort und zum Tötungsort ihrer Familie war aber vielleicht nicht die wichtigste, die Hela Fisher unternommen hat. Sie kehrte auch zu ihren Wurzeln zurück, vor denen es keine Flucht gibt, wie sie selbst geschrieben hat. In der Kindheit wollte sie keine Jüdin sein. Während des Krieges und danach verbarg sie ihre wahre Abstammung. In Israel hat sie ihre Identität definiert, doch immer noch war sie nicht bereit, den Freunden zu sagen, wer sie in der Wirklichkeit war. Die wahre und die wichtigste Rückkehr gelang ihr erst dank den in den neunziger Jahren zu Papier gebrachten und den Freunden geschenkten Erinnerungen – die Rückkehr zum Judentum. Eben dieses Ereignis ist in meiner Überzeugung der wahre Biographieabschluss und somit die wichtigste Erfahrung der Autorin.

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<sup>26</sup> Hela Fisher starb während dieser Text zum Drücken vorbereitet wurde.

<sup>27</sup> Ebd.

<sup>28</sup> Ebd.

Nitza Davidovich, Max Stern

**FROM WE TO ME: CHANGING VALUES IN ISRAELI POETRY AND SONG**  
**A Comparative Study of the Works of the Modern Israeli Poets**  
**Nathan Alterman and Yehuda Amichai**

**Background**

The Israel of today is not that of yesterday. Our society has changed (Almog 2003; 2004). It has moved from one of shared goals and collective responsibility to one which is closer to Western models – more individualistic, self-centered, and striving for self-fulfillment. And yet there is a complex sense in which “we” is “me” and “me” remains “we” (Zabar Ben-Yehoshua 2002; Maslovanti/Iram 2002).

This dichotomy is represented in the poetry of two of Israel’s greatest masters of the Modern Hebrew language – Nathan Alterman (1910–1970) and Yehuda Amichai (1924–2000) – as well as music. Often it is the melody, rhythm, harmony, texture – in a word, the style of the music to which the lyrics have been set that projects the ambiance of the poem. The varied styles of music reflect in a non-verbal way the changing tonal inflections of values addressed with a deep, immediate, almost subconscious directness (Yaoz 1994; Eliram 2000).

**We – Nathan Alterman**

Nathan Alterman’s “Shir Ha’Emek” is considered one of the cornerstones of Israeli popular song. It seems to have been born on the kibbutz. It is a lullaby to the land.

Rest comes to the weary  
Relaxation to the fatigued.  
A pale night descends  
On the fields of Emek Yizrael.  
Dew from below and moonlight from above  
From Beth Alfa to Nahalal.

The lyrics were set to music by a newcomer, Daniel Sambursky (1909–1977), a composer and teacher who was born in Danzig (Gdańsk), Poland, and arrived in Israel in 1933. He led group singing at the Brener House and over the radio during the formative period before statehood, from 1935 to 1950. Two elements made this tune a sing-a-long favorite and an Israeli original. One is the subtle use of syncopated “hora” rhythm ( ` - ` - - ), which made the subconscious statement “this is a song made for a group.” A second element is the Dorian modality, neither major nor minor, that said “this is a song from Eretz Israel” (Eliram 2000).

## Hora – a dance

While Shir Ha'Emek is not a hora per se, it draws upon it. The most popular and characteristic circle dance of the Yishuv became a symbol of the pioneer spirit – the renewal of Jewish life in Palestine. Its origins are many: Hassidic dance, Romania, even ancient Greek. In all cultures from primitive times, circle dances endow the individual with the strength which derives from group unity. The circular motion with neither beginning nor end represents eternity. Whenever the syncopated, quadruple rhythm of the hora is introduced into a song the connotation of shared experience is clear (Eliram 2001).

## Shir Boker – a march

Another collaboration between Alterman and Sambursky yielded “Shir Boker,” a march written on the eve of World War II. Besides hora, the march is a characteristic musical style of the period, implying “we are marching towards our goal together.” While marches have been known since ancient times, in the military they were meant to coordinate the movement of large numbers of soldiers. Since Napoleon the march has come to have heroic, sacrificial, and nationalistic connotations. The dotted-note rhythm in “Shir Boker” is found in the “Marseillaise” as well as the “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” In Palestine it was less military than goal-oriented – marching together to plow the fields, dry the swamps, and defend the land (<http://www.songs.co.il/artist.asp>).

The sun is burning on the mountains  
While in the valley the dew glistens.  
We love you our homeland,  
In joy, in song, in work.  
From the slopes of Lebanon to the Dead Sea  
We will cross you with the plow.  
We will yet plant you and build you.  
We will greatly beautify you...  
If the way is hard and treacherous  
If more than one falls by the way  
Forever we love you our homeland  
We are yours in battle and in work.

From where does this confident optimism spring? In this song we find over and over again that the phrases begin with the first person plural “we” – an expression of the collective. With the shared efforts of the group we bore through rock, we dry the swamps, we work, we plant, we beautify and make the land flower (Eliram 1995; 2001). Such phrases express the love, joy and satisfaction in doing something for the homeland. More than this they express the **faith, confidence** and **resolve** in their **own ability** to achieve this goal (Almog 2004). It is a desire for a new future for the new Jew, willing to pay the price individually for its fulfillment. “This is the way, there is no other!” (Eliram 1995; 2000; 2001)

Also expressed is the harmonious relationship between man, nature and the land. The sun shines, the dew sparkles. It is an atmosphere of renewal. A new dawn is breaking; the fields will be redeemed by a new man who has returned to the soil. Not since the biblical Song of Songs has nature imagery returned to Hebrew poetry. (Zion is likened to a woman in love, ready to give without asking in return.)

These optimistic, confident songs from the pre-State period look forward to a nation in the process of becoming with a good morale. They draw upon an idealistic Zionist orientation of solidarity.

### **We – Nathan Alterman**

Nathan Alterman came to Israel with his family in 1925 at the age of 15. He had spent his childhood in Warsaw, where his father managed a kindergarten for Jewish children. Undoubtedly, he was influenced by the Hebrew rhymes his father would make up for the children. He spent some of the years of World War I and the Revolution in Russia. His youth was spent in Tel Aviv in the late 1920s and 1930s. He returned to Europe, though, to study agriculture in France, until his hobby became a profession. His songs often deal with basic Eretz Yisrael values: the survival of the individual, and survival of the people. Some term him a visionary poet with an independent faith in what life ought to be, and values which are more than life itself (Zilberstein/Zabar-Ben Yehoshua 1999).

A well-known colleague, Moshe Shamir, wrote in the article “The Poet as Leader:”

The popularity of Alterman had many sides, as did his writing and personality. It is doubtful if there is another in the history of Hebrew letters akin to him. He expressed the feeling of the masses. He was accepted by the youth for his song lyrics which extended over many years. Alterman was one of the few poets who influenced society, the nation, and the State.

The “Seventh Column” was a title of his own creation, which gave him a platform as a national poet for the founding generation of the State, in the actual sense of the word. His poems served as testimony to the generation of fighters in the period of the British Mandate and the War of Independence. For 33 years, from 1934 to 1967, the poet Nathan Alterman wrote over 1000 columns of current events, most of them rhyming, for two newspapers: *Davar*, in the aforementioned “Seventh Column,” and *Ha’aretz*, in the leisure section. One of his best-known poems was “The Silver Platter,” which was printed in *Davar* on Friday, December 19, 1947, only three weeks after November 29<sup>th</sup> 1947, the date of the UN decision to establish the State – casualties from the Independence War that broke out were heavy. Alterman’s column was based on current events and remarks from the speeches of political leaders.

### **Song – “The Silver Platter”**

The name of the poem “The Silver Platter” is based on a phrase made by the President of the World Zionist Federation, Professor Chaim Weitzman: “A State is not handed to a people on a silver platter” (Alterman 1998).



The Earth grows still  
 The lurid sky slowly pales...  
 A girl and boy step forward  
 And slowly walk before the waiting nation...  
 Silently the two approach  
 And stand  
 Are they of the quick or of the dead?  
 Through wondering tears the people stare.  
 "Who are you, the silent two?"  
 And they reply: "We are the silver platter  
 Upon which the Jewish State was served to you."

The poem became a cultural symbol. Alterman creates a powerful dialogue between the nation and the individual. It is the image of a boy and girl who **walk slowly** with a single resolve to protect the homeland. It is not clear if they are alive or dead. The nation stands by unable to utter a sound. With mixed emotions the people ask "Who are you?" The youths reply "We are the silver platter on which is given the Jewish State."

The musical setting to the poem is in triple time and resembles a slow waltz, but it is not a waltz. It is a march in triple time (  $\text{''' ''' '''}$  ). Such marches were prevalent in France before the revolution. One stately step was taken to a bar of three beats.

Perhaps the composer Nahum Heimann (born in Riga, 1934) had the image of "walking slowly" in mind when he chose this kind of pace, for he had spent some time in Paris during his journeyman days. Heimann came to Israel on the eve of World War II in 1939. He grew up in Tel Aviv, but after high school chose to live on a kibbutz. Later he spent a number of years abroad as a film composer in Paris, London and the US before returning to Israel. Ten years younger than Alterman, he set "The Silver Patter" in his twenties.

Some say three-quarter time is never dangerous. Perhaps instinctively he utilized this meter to express the innocence of youth against the awesome price of Statehood. The accompaniment, while an Israeli mix of elements, confirms the character of the slow march idea by introducing a military snare drum triplet rhythm and trumpet calls in the background of the final verse of the poem (Hirshberg 2005; Eliram 2006).

## **Me – Yehuda Amichai**

Yehuda Amichai (1924–2000) was born in Germany and arrived in Israel with his family in 1935. During World War II he served in the British Army's Jewish Legion. During the War of Independence he served in the Palmach, the elite fighting force of the Yishuv, and participated in brutal battles and skirmishes. These experiences found expression in his poetry. Amichai studied literature and Bible at the Hebrew University. He taught in public schools, and in higher academic frameworks abroad. In 1982 he received the Israel Prize for his writing. His style is deceptively simple. It is phrased in everyday language, yet it surprises with its sensitivity to nuance and precision. His poems are considered among the best of Modern Hebrew and are translated into 33 languages.

Amichai's relationship to the national experience is existential. He rejects the role of prophet and visionary. "The poet is a person, just like anyone else expressing the individual thought of every one of us", he writes (Bloch/Mitchell 1986; 1996).

### **Song – Sabbath Eve**

His poem "Sabbath Eve" is characteristic of his sense of individual perspective on overwhelming reality. It is a love song in time of war. It is voiced in the feminine, a personal reflection, an inner desire for warmth in a world dominated by work, duty and obligation. It addresses intimate human needs and concerns.

Will you come to me tonight?  
The clothes are already on the line.  
The endless war that never ceases  
Is now in another place.

"Sabbath Eve" was set as a ballad by Moshe Wilensky (1910–1997), one of Israel's veteran song writers and theater composers and arrangers. He arrived in Palestine in 1933 after graduating from the Warsaw Conservatory as a composer-conductor. A solo songstress, Nurit Galron, sings to a single guitar in this intimate interpretation. The atmosphere is laden with melancholy and personal feelings. The hopes and ambitions of the nation are somewhere outside. We are in the world of a woman longing for her man, who is either preoccupied with work or off to war. The sense of longing is highlighted by Wilensky in the frequent twists of melody, shifting bitter sweetly between major and minor, as expressions of wishes fulfilled and dreams deferred (<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs>).

### **A comparison**

The differences between Alterman's Hebrew "Modernism" and Amichai's "Post Modernism" may be seen as a comparison between the collective and the individual. These attitudes may be seen as a crisis of values: faith versus cynicism, confidence (which enabled nation-building) in contrast to the (endless questioning and) doubt (which seems to lead to national disintegration).

While both the songs cited above deal with national issues (i.e. war, nation, responsibility), "Shir Boker" is an expression of optimism, whereas "Sabbath Eve" touches on melancholy. "The Silver Platter" depicts a boy and a girl as symbols of self-sacrifice, while "Sabbath Eve" portrays men and women longing for indulgence.

### **Irony and traditional Jewish sources**

The traditional "El Maleh Rachamim" is a prayer for the dead. A prayer of deep devotion, it is chanted at burial services and at public memorial commemoration ceremonies, for victims of the Holocaust as well as terrorist attacks. It originated in the

Jewish communities of Western and Eastern Europe, where it was recited for the martyrs of the Crusades and the Chmielnicki massacres. Because the prayer is considered holy and is included in the liturgy, there is an element of sacrilege and Israeli “chutzpah” involved in drawing upon it as a subject for poetry.

Amichai’s is a prayer for the living. It plays with the assonance of the Hebrew language and creates a completely different, personal, existential – perhaps agnostic expression which seems to tear at the poet’s soul. While the original is eternal, timeless, the perspective of Amichai is contemporary, timely, now. He is reacting to Israel’s wars with the Arabs and terrorist attacks. He sees God in his own particular frame and asks “Why don’t you give mercy here to those of us on earth, so that we may be spared the horror and tragedy of constantly living as a society in mourning, from one memorial ceremony to the next?”

All merciful God  
 Were it not that you were so full of mercy  
 Perhaps there would be mercy in the world  
 And not just with you.  
 I who have picked flowers in the mountains  
 And looked into the valleys,  
 I who dragged corpses from hills,  
 I know to tell that the world is devoid of mercy

Israeli singer-composer Shlomo Gronich (1949) intones the modern prayer, not in the solemn, dignified atmosphere of the synagogue, but in the easy-listening style of the nightclub. His rendition combines a speaking-singing style with Romanian gypsy melisma. Gronich accompanies himself, punctuating his cries with jazz chords at the piano. It is the setting and the thought of the philosophical fatalist, not the ceremonial rendition of Tradition, which speaks to us: “One glimpse of It within the Tavern caught, Better than in the Temple lost outright” (*The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, LVI).

Is this the modern secular Israeli, a disenfranchised individual no longer tied to Tradition but still arguing with God? Or perhaps it is a salon singer’s version of Hassidic Rabbi Levi from Berdichev. Here is an expression of a sense of tragic fatality unredeemed by the hopes of Messianic visions that hover over contemporary Israeli society.

### Contrasts and comparisons

What distinguishes Amichai’s prosaic vision from Alterman’s idealistic one is not the content of the poetry, but rather its attitude, the direction of the thought, the way he views reality. Amichai seeks existence and quiet over sacrifice and heroism. He justifies the everyday. It contains a little of everything (i.e. community, giving, death). But he is ready to trade identity for comfort. He carries on an ironic dialogue with Tradition. His work is popular with the generation of sabras born since the 1950s.

One of the symbols of the Palmach generation is sacrifice. In Judaism death is not a value. It has a meaning, though, if it is for a purpose. Many of the founding generation find truth in Alterman’s heroic vision and transform sacrifice itself into

something elevated. Amichai protests in the name of life, in the name of the normal, regular flow of everyday happenings. Every war is murder. There is no meaning to war. He accepts only natural death, not elevated, heroic sacrifice (Arend 2000).

### **The exception proves the rule – “Here ends the day of battle”**

If we thought Amichai’s desire for the common place of reality had won the day, and that the time for heroism had past, the recent Lebanon War proved us wrong. The heroes and the brave of yesteryear still dwell amongst us. One of them was a recent graduate at the College of Judea and Samaria, Major Roy Klein, who fell in the line of duty by throwing himself on a grenade that had been lobbed toward his soldiers. He absorbed the impact with his body and saved the lives of many around him. Leaping to certain death he was heard to cry out “Sh’ma Yisrael!”

“Here Ends the Day of Battle” is a dirge on the noble death, the death of Saul, the first King of Israel. Alterman wrote it over half a century ago. One of the founders of the Zemer Ivri, Mordecai Zeira (1909, Kiev, aliyah 1924, 1986, Israel) set it as a funeral march. It is the reverse side of “The Silver Platter.” It expresses not the **resolve for**, but the **price of** freedom and identity.

The day of battle and its eve ends.  
A day full of cries of escape.  
The King fell on his sword this day.  
And Giboa wore defeat.  
And in the land, until dawn  
The gallop of the fleeing was heard.  
And the reins of the fastest horse were covered with blood.  
The messengers relayed that the battle was lost.  
The day of battle and its eve ends.  
The King fell on his sword.

The song is a heroic elegy of Biblical and Classical proportions (i.e. Bible, *Iliad*). It is a metaphor for all those who gave the last measure of devotion in battle and failed. Zeira clothes the poem in a minor tonality. The solemn awesome quality of defeat is marked by the deep tones of the trombone and field drums. We hear long drawn-out dactyl rhythms, and elongated dotted-not values.

### **Conclusion**

“Zemer Ivri” is for many the Talmud of our time, a kind of supra-legal repertoire and behavioral code. It mirrors popular attitudes and social values, and confirms shared feelings and experiences for generations of Israelis. Among the subjects addressed are: relationship to the homeland, willingness to act, to sacrifice, to fight if need be for her. This readiness is expressed in the collective voice “We.”

Israel's modern popular folk song (*zemer ivri*) is unique in the folk traditions of the world in that it is not the creation of an anonymous collective, nor of an illiterate peasantry. Rather it is the creation of urban, cosmopolitan, and educated individuals who have lived the Israeli experience. What makes their work popular-folk music, then? If there is an answer, it is in the quality of their identification with the people, as a collective and as individuals. This song has become both an expression and a framer of popular consciousness, capturing fleeting ideas, emotions, and moods prevalent in the various periods, trials and tribulations. The story of Modern Israel is written in song (Eliram 2006).

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Nitza Davidovitch, Max Stern

## JERUSALEM IN POETRY AND SONG

In the Midrash there are 70 different names for Jerusalem. It is known as “The City of David” or just “The City,” the capital and most important city of the one who conquered it from the Jebusites and gave it this name (Eliram 2006). Jerusalem is called Zion after Mount Zion, on which a part of the city was built. It also the name of the nation of Israel “For from Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isaiah).

In time Zion came to refer to the Holy Land (Eliram 2001). Therefore a Jew who believes in the national revival of the Land of Israel is known as a “Zionist” (Almog 2004).

According to legend, it was the Patriarch Abraham who gave Mount Moriah, where Jerusalem now stands, its name. It was a combination of awe – “yirah” – and peace – “shalem,” a place where men find peace dwelling together, living in the fear of the Almighty. Since Biblical times Jerusalem has been a source for poetic and musical inspiration and elation. The history of Jerusalem could be written in song (Eliram 1995). The earliest songs for Jerusalem were written to be sung in the Temple of Solomon.

A Song and Psalm for the Sons of Korah  
Great is the Lord and highly to be praised  
In the city of God, the mountain of holiness.  
Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion  
On the sides of the north, the city of the great King. (Ps. 48)

The Laments of Jeremiah the prophet, written after the destruction of the First Temple, are the earliest dirges of Zion.

How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!  
How she is become a widow!  
She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces,  
How is she become tributary! (Lamentations 1.1)

The cries of the exiles deported to Babylon ring through the ages.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept,  
When we remembered Zion...  
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?  
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning...  
If I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy. (Ps. 137: 1, 3–6)

Many are the tunes that have been written to these words. The Early Pioneers of Eretz Yisrael adopted the canon form, but cast the words in a traditional prayer mode

from eastern Europe (i.e. *Ahavoh Rabbah*). It was sung for many years in school and in the community (ex. 1).

One of the most widely known settings is sung at Jewish weddings at the bridal canopy following the traditional breaking of the glass by the bridegroom, as a symbolic act in remembrance of the destruction of Jerusalem (Eliram 2000). Even in a moment of personal joy, the Jewish People remember their past (Hirshberg 2005). It is sung throughout Israel and the Diaspora to this day (ex. 2)

Not only Jews remember. In the Puritan congregations of early 18<sup>th</sup> century America, these words were sung as a round. In the 1970s the tune resurfaced, popularized in a version sung by the Country and Western singer Don MacLean on his album “American Pie” (ex. 3).

The catastrophe of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD and the dispersion of the Jewish People to the four corners of the earth is documented again and again in our liturgical poetry. However, for two centuries, following the destruction, it was forbidden to sing at all. Gradually the authors of the sacred prayer poems (*piyyutim*) found melodies to their words. These poets living under foreign rule in Palestine and the Diaspora refer to Jerusalem as the Holy City, as a symbol of the Holy Land itself.

In these early poems as well as in the creations of our own time, the powerful longing of the people for their homeland finds expression in the urge to renew the days of yore. The poets of medieval Spain, their hearts aching for Zion, lamented their bitter fate in songs that voiced a vision of Redemption. This longing for Jerusalem found its supreme voice in a group of poems by R. Judah Halevi (1075–1141) known as “Zionides” (ex. 4).

My heart is in the East and I am in the far off West.  
How can I find an appetite for food? How can I enjoy it.  
How can I fulfill my vows and pledges, While  
Zion lies in the fetters of Edom and I am in Arab chains.  
It would be easy for me to leave behind all the good things of Spain;  
It would be precious to see the dust of the ruined Shrine.  
(Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse, edited by T. Carmi, p. 347)

In a heroic act of faith, Halevi the author of the philosophical defense of his faith, “Kuzari,” made the dangerous journey to Spain and Egypt. According to legend, he is said to have reached the Holy City. As he leaned down to kiss its stones, a passing Arab horseman trampled him to death as he was reciting his famous lament “Ode to Zion,” and sealed his immortality.

This dirge, or “kinot,” has entered the liturgy of the Ninth of Av. It is the classic expression for all Jews in exile, reflecting not only the burden of the dispossessed and oppressed, but also the yearning to return. Nurit Hirsch, one of Israel’s most popular songwriters, created a Modern Hebrew popular folksong from Halevi’s text in the 1960s. It has been sung and arranged again and again (ex. 5).

Zion, will you not ask after the peace of your sons imprisoned in exile.  
For they, the remainder of your flock, enquire after you.  
From West and East, North and South, from every side.

Accept the greetings of those near and far and the blessings of this captive of desire...  
I am like a jackal when I weep for your affliction:  
But when I dream of your exiles return, I am a harp for your songs.

Other seekers and pilgrims made their way to Jerusalem, among them the medieval biblical commentator R. Moshe Ben Nahman, “Nachmanides.” He conveyed his impressions in a letter written to his family in 1267.

I am writing you this letter from the holy city of Jerusalem. What can I tell you about the country? Great is the misery and great the ruins... To sum it all up, all that is holy is broken and destroyed more than the rest, and Jerusalem is worse than the rest of the country, and Judea worse and the Galil, and yet with all that devastation – it is still very good. People regularly come to Jerusalem from Damascus and from Aleppo and from all parts of the country to see the Temple and weep over it.

As a result of the Spanish Inquisition, exiles sought safer ports throughout the Mediterranean in North Africa, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. A small group of world-forsaking mystics, the Kabbalists, found refuge in Safed. Their influence on Jewish Liturgy was profound and enduring. Among them were the charismatic young Isaac Luria “the Ari,” Moses Cordevero, Joseph Caro, author of the Code of Jewish Law, and the poet R. Shelomo ben Moshe Haim Alkabes (1505–1584).

Alkabes’ poem “Lecho Dodi,” sung at the welcoming of the Sabbath, became the most famous piyyut of all time. Sung by all the communities of Israel, it has been set to more than 2000 tunes. One of its verses mentions Jerusalem:

Royal sanctuary, God’s city and shrine,  
Rise from the ruins of thy despair.  
Long hast thou dwelt in the vale of woe;  
God’s loving pity shall crown thy prayer.  
(Siddur David de Sola Pool)

Among the many melodies sung today in synagogues throughout Israel and the Diaspora some were forged in the Sephardic (ex. 7) and Ashkenaz communities of Europe (ex. 6). Others are of Hassidic origin (ex.8). One is a contrafact adaptation of an early pioneer song of Eretz Yisrael “Kumi Uri” (ex. 9). One of the creators of the Modern Hebrew Popular-Folk Song (zemer ivri) set the text to an original tune by a composer of the Yishuv born in Jaffo, David Zehavi (1910–1975) (ex.10).

The influence of Spanish Golden Age poets was far-reaching. Many of the writers were skilled Hazzanim and sacred singers. They performed their songs themselves, like modern pop-rock vocalists.

They demonstrated to Jews throughout the Diaspora that Biblical Hebrew could be fashioned into lyric expression. Thoroughly acquainted with Bible, Talmud, Midrash and Halachic literature, they drew abundantly from these sources, weaving a rich tapestry of poetry and song (Almog 2003). Sometimes it was a legend that they retold in verse, extracting a phrase and elaborating upon it, sometimes taking Jewish law and turning it into a lyric.

Their influence was far-reaching. As far away as Yemen, generations were inspired to poetic release of their pent-up religious emotions. Among the greatest of Yemenite poets was the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Rabbi Shalem Shabazi, a mystic figure legend credits with having “jumped to Jerusalem.” His works, and those of dozens of other Yemenite poets, are collected in the “Diwan,” a songbook of lyrics still sung by Yemenite Jews



today on the Sabbath, holidays and joyous occasions in homes and synagogues. One of these songs, “Kirya Yefefiya” (ex. 11), a praise to the Holy City, was adopted by the early pioneers of Palestine and has become an Israeli folksong, sung by solo singers and choirs alike.

Beautiful Jerusalem, joy of your cities,  
Faithful City to your kings and ministers,  
Ever will I recall the loveliness of your colors.  
To dwell in your courts has my heart yearned.  
Would I could kiss your stones and bless your dust.  
Since your sons’ dispersion,  
My soul has known naught but unrest.

Jerusalem continues to play a central role in the rebirth of the Jewish nation in its ancient homeland. David Ben Gurion, the first prime minister of the State of Israel, said in a speech accepting honorary citizenship:

Jerusalem is the national capital. It is the historic Jewish capital, the capital of the Hebrew spirit, the eternal capital of Israel. More than anything Jerusalem should be an example to the entire country and the entire nation, an example for all Jewish households in Israel and the Diaspora. Jerusalem itself should be a factor of brotherhood, of cohesion and mutual respect.

The Six Day War reclaimed the Temple Mount and Wailing Wall. The last physical vestiges of ancient Jewish sovereignty in the Holy Land returned to Jewish hands and inspired a burst of creativity. One song, “Hakotel” (ex. 12), gives expression to the meaning of the Wailing Wall for contemporary Israelis.

The Wailing Wall is moss and sadness.  
The Wailing Wall is lead and blood.  
Some people have a heart of stone.  
Some stones have a human heart.  
(lyrics: Yossi Gamzu, music: Dov Seltzer)

While such a song echoes popular feelings, it nonetheless draws upon deep traditions. Soon after the war, Rav Zvi Yehudah HaCohen Kook, head of the Merchaz HaRav Yeshivah, delivered the following address:

From the ends of the earth, from the four corners of the globe, from all the countries of the Diaspora flow the ‘prayers of the heart.’ To a central point in the land, towards this city, this house. These stones, the remnants of the Temple Mount are for us holy, because they are silent. For the Holy Spirit has never departed from the Western Wall, and the spirit of the living God of Israel, whose name is called from there, has always hovered above them. **These stones are our hearts.**

It is said that there are three Jerusalems. One is the city that people live in today. One is the historic city of Ancient Israel. The third is a heavenly ideal. The Midrash relates:

“The Jerusalem on earth is nothing, this is not the house of God, that He builds with His own hand,” said Jacob. “But if thou sayest that God with His own hands builds Himself a Temple in heaven,” replies the Messiah, “know then that with His hands also He will build the Temple on earth.” (Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, p. 492)

The most famous contemporary song about Jerusalem was written a few months before the outbreak of the Six Day War by a young songwriter from Kibbutz Kinneret, Naomi Shemer. “Jerusalem of Gold” (ex. 13) draws its title from a Talmudic reference.

It was the diadem that Rabbi Akiva gave to his wife Rachel as a present. Her refrain combines this Talmudic image with a reference to a line from R. Yehudah Halevi's "Ode to Zion." It sums up succinctly the ties modern Israelis feel for Jerusalem. It is a link that unites generations.

Jerusalem of Gold, of brass and light  
For all your songs I am your harp.

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## **REVIEWS**

## REVIEW

*Approaching Yehud: New Approaches to the Study of the Persian Period*, ed. by Jon L. Berquist (Society of Biblical Literature, Semeia Studies), Atlanta 2007, 249 pp.; ISBN 9781589831452

The Persian period in the history of Palestine was until recently among the most neglected by historians and Biblical scholars alike. Most research focused on uncovering the secrets of the Israeli monarchy, prophetism, and the birth of rabbinical Judaism and Christianity, largely ignoring texts from the Persian period and its impact on the development of Biblical literature. Only the past two decades have brought a discernibly growing interest in that period, producing many significant works.

The collection of essays titled *Approaching Yehud* edited by Jon Berquist contains studies on the Persian era which combine both traditional and new methods of Biblical research. The shared focus of the contributions and their varied approaches make the volume a very important publication. For the most part, the texts are thematically grouped, with an issue introduced in one article elaborated on in the next using different research methods. It is precisely the range and combinations of such methods – linguistic, literary, archaeological, sociological – that make the book what it is.

The introduction and the last article in the volume, “Psalms, Postcolonialism, and the Construction of the Self” (pp. 195–202), by Jon L. Berquist enclose the book between them. The introduction presents the development of research up to now and the reasons why a new insight into the Persian period is needed, and from a different perspective than has been adopted so far. In his contribution, J.L. Berquist asks questions about the historical context and the role of psalms at the time of the Second Temple. He combines his observations with a discussion on mutual interactions between the Persian Empire and the Jewish community it subjugated. He points out issues to be addressed by researchers into the period’s writings.

In “Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Persian Period” (pp. 7–24), Melody D. Knowles analyzes the term “pilgrimage.” She tries to trace its meaning and links between Jewish tradition and Greek culture. Studying prophetic and historical texts and psalms, she shows three different ways of looking at pilgrimage. An analysis of Biblical books for the practice of pilgrimage in conjunction with the available archaeological evidence on settlement in Persian-period Jerusalem enables her to put forward two hypotheses. One is that the purpose of the period’s Biblical texts was to encourage the faithful to travel to the “city of Yahweh.” The other proposes that the writings reflected the situation in a religious community whose members lived mostly outside the city and would typically visit the Temple for religious observances.

Richard Butch (“Intertextuality in the Persian Period,” pp. 25–35) reviews research in intertextual reading of the Bible to gain insight into the Persian period. He notes the shortcomings in this respect which are also reflected in other aspects of Biblical

studies. He believes that this is due to the insufficient openness of researchers into the Persian period, who did not trust this method, unlike those studying other parts of the Biblical canon. Butch presents important achievements in this regard, emphasizing the role of two scholars, Donald C. Polaski and Christine Mitchell, whose studies he considers as a particularly successful combination of methodologies from many other disciplines.

Donald C. Polaski and Christine Mitchell are also among the contributors. Both authors share an interest in the social and literary usage of historiographic texts. In his essay "What Mean These Stones? Inscriptions, Textuality and Power in Persia and Yehud" (pp. 37–48), Polaski studies the Behistun text and three fragments of the Book of Joshua (Josh 8; 22; 24). What he focuses on is not the meaning of the text alone, but rather the act of its creation. He uses this issue as a point of departure for a discussion of the canon. The problem is particularly important for the Persian period, chiefly because it is increasingly often seen as a starting point for the later development of the Biblical canon. The author, however, is not concerned with the form of the Biblical text at the time; he rather concentrates on how the period's writing became a powerful social and political instrument. Christine Mitchell ("How Lonely Sits the City': Identity and the Creation of History," pp. 71–83) wonders about the origin of the impulse which helped usher in historiographical literature. Using research methods similar to those employed by Polaski, she begins from an analysis of Lam 1:1 to go on to inquire about the development of historiography. She concludes that the genre developed in response to the Jews' desire for their own identity in the period after the Babylonian captivity.

David Janzen ("Scholars, Witches, Ideologues, and What the Text Said: Ezra 9–10 and Its Interpretation," pp. 49–69) addresses mixed marriages. He asks why the author of Ezra insists that the faithful dissolve their marriages to alien women if Deuteronomy and other Old Testament fragments do not make such rigorous demands. An analysis of the text using modern sociological methods leads him to conclude that such actions stemmed from social disintegration and accusations of witchcraft, and were intended to protect the purity of the nation and prevent Yahweh's anger.

B.A. Strawn, ("A World under Control': Isaiah 60 and the Apadana Reliefs from Persepolis," pp. 85–116) revisits the dating question of Trito-Isaiah at the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. To resolve the problem, the author proposes an original methodological approach. In analyzing the Apadana reliefs from Persepolis, their subject and ideology, he observes that they are close to Isaiah 60. He concludes that the convergence between the two may suggest that they were created in the same period.

An equally unconventional approach toward his subject is used by J.P. Ruiz ("An Exile's Baggage: Toward a Postcolonial Reading of Ezekiel," pp. 117–135). While there is nothing wrong with studying exile based on the Book of Ezekiel, it is objectionable to try to understand the experience of exile in 586 BC by drawing comparisons to the situation of a present-day Cuban political refugee, Fernando Segovia, a scholar who met with a friendly welcome in his new country of settlement. The author tries to liken the experiences of 20<sup>th</sup>-century colonialism to the Persian era, a highly dubious technique to employ.

J. Kessler (“Diaspora and Homeland in the Early Achaemenid Period: Community, Geography and Demography in Zechariah 1–8,” pp. 137–166) addresses Yehud community–building and maintaining its national identity. He inquires about how members of the community viewed other Yahwists who were separated from them ideologically or geographically. His demographic study is based on research by Carter and Lipschitz and on his own sociological analyses. His sociological and demographic analysis of Zech 1–8 enables him to gain some highly interesting insights into life in Yehud.

The next two essays in the volume share a feminist approach to the treatment of women in Yehud. H.R. Marbury’s contribution (“The Strange Woman in Persian Yehud: A Reading of Proverbs 7,” pp. 167–182) concerns alien women in the Book of Proverbs. The author concentrates on questions about how public administrative bodies operated and how authorities related to social groups in Israel. He observes that Persian authorities in investing in local worship were trying to secure the loyalty of inhabitants. While studying the Book of Proverbs, he suggests that the Persian administration took an interest in ethnic control and sexuality in the Yehud community. J.L. Koosed, (“Qoheleth in Love and Trouble,” pp. 183–193) tries to explain the causes of the dislike toward women apparent in various fragments of the Book of Ecclesiastes. She wonders about the text’s lack of cohesion and its ideology. In her opinion, an analysis of the book’s text may suggest that it was left unfinished. Her article seems one of the most controversial in the entire volume.

Despite the unconventional methods used by the various contributors, some of which may meet with objections from many scholars, I found in the volume many insights which have altered my understanding of Yehud. I therefore believe that the new, radical approaches adopted by some of the contributors may, by provoking disputes, facilitate resolution of the perplexing complexities of the Persian era.

Marcin Sosik

## REVIEW

*Unbequeme Wahrheiten. Polen und sein Verhältnis zu den Juden*, hrsg. von Barbara Engelking und Helga Hirsch, Edition Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 2008, pp. 309

The volume *Troublesome Truths. Poland and its Relationship with the Jews*, edited by the Polish Holocaust researcher Barbara Engelking and the German journalist Helga Hirsch, former Poland correspondent of the weekly magazine *Zeit*, was published 40 years after the last expulsion of Jews from Poland in 1968, an event which put an end to the long common Polish-Jewish history. Today, in Poland live only approximately 12,000–15,000 persons who consider themselves as Jews and are now rediscovering their familiar, cultural or religious roots. But there are still conflicts and controversies which trouble the mutual relations between the Jewish and non-Jewish inhabitants of Poland.

After 1968, for many years, issues connected to Jews were scarcely audible within the Polish collective memory and society, there seemed to be no interest whatsoever and Jewish topics were not written about. Instead, myths and prejudices thrived and populated the minds. Poland, previously home to the biggest Jewish community in Europe, has long been regarded as a country devoid of Jews but still anti-Semitic. The self-image of Poles as innocent victims of history and patriotic Roman Catholics contrasted with their stereotype collective notion of Jews as traitors and communists (“Żydo-Komuna”), as articulated even by Andrzej Szczypiorski in his essay on “Poles and Jews” for the Parisian *Kultura* in 1979. The post-World War II coexistence between Jews and Poles was repeatedly disturbed by pogroms (such as in Kielce in 1946 and elsewhere), the anti-Semitic climate during the Stalin era, the anti-Jewish campaigns in 1956/1957 and 1968 and forced mass emigration of so-called Polish citizens “of Jewish origin.” The fact that Poles were not only saviors of the Jews and victims of the Nazis but also perpetrators who murdered Jews or denounced them to the German occupants was also taboo in Poland.

From time to time open conflicts and controversies with an international echo broke out between Jews and Poles, such as for instance on the issue of the Carmelite cloister and crosses in Oświęcim (Auschwitz) in 1998. The biggest shock to shake the country, though, took place after the historian Jan Tomasz Gross’s book revealed the history of the pogrom in the small Polish town of Jedwabne (1941) in 2000/2001. The furious debates over the issue were documented in the periodical *Transodra* in 2001, and the editors quote from it.

The book, documenting the intellectual climate in Poland, is divided into five thematic sections which are preceded by a short introduction: I. Question of Partial Responsibility; II. Incidents in the Ghetto of Warsaw; III. Auschwitz and the Consciousness of the Holocaust; IV. We from Jedwabne; V. Fear – Anti-Semitism after the War. The book includes German translations of 24 articles by Polish authors

also well known abroad, such as Cardinal Józef Glemp and the priest Stanisław Musiał, among them a number of the landmark essays which have appeared in Poland since 1987, such as Hanna Świda-Ziomba's "The Shame of Indifference" (from *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 17, 1998) or Stanisław Krajewski's "Auschwitz as a Challenge" (from *Midrasz*, April 1997) and others, starting with Jan Błoński's famous article in the Catholic *Tygodnik Powszechny*, "Poor Poles Look at the Ghetto," of January 11, 1987. Błoński followed here Czesław Miłosz' lyrical analysis of the Polish attitude towards the Jews as expressed as early as 1943 [sic!] in his poems "The Poor Christian sees the Ghetto" and "Campo dei fiori," and initiated a controversial debate in Poland which was echoed abroad and documented in *'My Brother's Keeper?' Recent Polish Debates on the Holocaust*, edited by Anthony Polonsky in 1990. Engelking and Hirsch, by the way, do not list this book in their bibliography.

The book *Troublesome Truths* is an important directory and guide through the labyrinth of Polish-Jewish relations with their many ups and downs, ending with the controversy about the recently published second book by Jan Tomasz Gross, *Fear*, telling of post-war Polish anti-Semitism. German readers can thus learn a lot about their Polish neighbors' problems with their history, reminding them at times of their own. This book, including a glossary and a bibliography, is an appeal to Poles "to stop considering anti-Semitism as folklore" and to the Catholic Church to stop tolerating an institution within its own walls, preaching hatred towards Jews, like the Polish Catholic Radio Maryja. The volume was published some months before the German Pope Benedict XVI rehabilitated the notorious anti-Semitic Pius Brotherhood. It is therefore highly relevant not only on the two sides of the Oder-Neisse border.

Elvira Grözinger